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# UNKNOWN SUSSEX

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

A CRUISE ACROSS EUROPE

ADVENTURES WITH A SKETCH BOOK

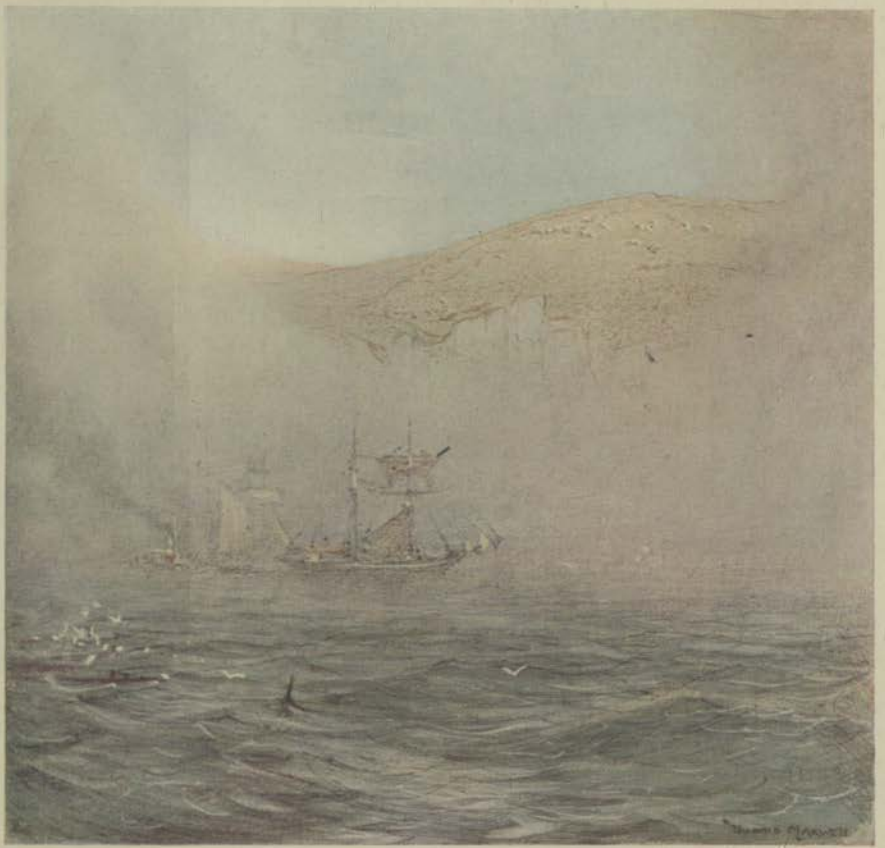
THE LAST CRUSADE, 1914—1918

A DWELLER IN MESOPOTAMIA

A PAINTER IN PALESTINE

UNKNOWN KENT

THE BODLEY HEAD



"AND HERE THE SEA-FOGS LAP AND CLING,
AND HERE, EACH WARNING EACH,
THE SHEEP-BELLS AND THE SHIP-BELLS RING
ALONG THE HIDDEN BEACH."

*KIPLING*

# UNKNOWN SUSSEX

## BY DONALD MAXWELL

Being a series of unmethodical Explorations of the County illustrated in line and colour by the Author

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# PREFACE

WHILE compiling *Unknown Kent* I wandered much and made many sketches without any plan of itinerary, so much so, that I constantly found myself over the county boundary exploring the delights of Sussex. In consequence of having whetted my scenic appetite by these border raids I determined on a more thorough series of perambulations through Kent's neighbouring county, and this medley of capricious adventures and leaves from my sketch-book is the result. Search as you may, you will find no sort of sequence, rhyme, or reason in my tours.

Many have sung the beauties of Sussex; but I have tried to avoid doing again what other men have done, and rather turned my attention to matters both historical and pictorial which they have let go. It is in this sense, and in this sense only, that my story deals with the Unknown in the county. Like Kent, the story of Sussex is concerned with the sea and sea power. Linked with the Theme of sea power is the romance of the Lost Iron Age of the Weald, an Age which touched the history of England very intimately. The history of England is largely the history of the Navy,

and the Navy came to depend upon the ordnance of the Wealden Ironmasters. Yet the importance of this old-time Black Country has been very lightly dealt with by historians.

To Mr. Rudyard Kipling and to Mr. Hilaire Belloc I am indebted for kind permission to use portions of their Sussex songs. References to other authors are acknowledged in the text. To my old friend the *Graphic* and to the *Yachting Monthly* I am also grateful, as I have been able to use sketches which in some form or other have appeared in their pages.

THE BEACON,
BORSTAL,
ROCHESTER.
*September* 21, 1923.

# CONTENTS


| | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| I. | A Song of the Saxons | 1 |
| II. | In the Forests of East Sussex | 9 |
| III. | A Fantasy of Brighton | 23 |
| IV. | The Iron-Seekers | 31 |
| V. | Hammer Ponds and Furnace Woods | 55 |
| VI. | How Winchelsea planned New York | 75 |
| VII. | The Delectable Mountains | 95 |
| VIII. | Smuggling Sussex | 125 |
| IX. | The Lost Harbours of Sussex | 151 |
| X. | Dead Fires | 167 |
| XI. | The Iron Ghost | 183 |
| | Index | 205 |

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

## PLATES

*Colour*


| | FACING PAGE |
|---|---|
| "And here the Sea-fogs Lap and Cling" | *Frontispiece* |
| The Saxon Tower of Sompting | 6 |
| The First Mill on the Medway | 12 |
| In Broadwater Forest | 20 |
| The Lights of Brighton | 24 |
| A Nocturne of Lewes | 28 |
| Mott's Mill | 36 |
| Mayfield | 62 |
| "Green Sussex fading into Blue" | 70 |
| In Rye | 78 |
| Ypres Tower, Rye | 92 |
| The South Downs at Lewes | 98 |
| Southover | 102 |
| Eastbourne | 104 |
| Cuckmere Haven | 128 |
| Hastings from East Cliff | 154 |
| Off Rye | 159 |
| Newhaven | 162 |

FACING PAGE

OFF HASTINGS . . . . . 164
HUGGETT'S FURNACE MILL . . . . . 178
THE BLACK COUNTRY OF THE MIDDLE AGES . . . . . 200

*Monochrome*

"THE FALLS OF THE MEDWAY" AT ERIDGE . . . . . 18
A NOCTURNE OF WEST STREET, BRIGHTON . . . . . 26
A FOLD IN THE HILLS . . . . . 100
BEACHY HEAD . . . . . 110
THE FRYARS, WEST CHILTINGTON . . . . . 116
THE BLUE IDOL . . . . . 122
BLAKE'S COTTAGE AT FELPHAM . . . . . 156
THE OWERS LIGHTSHIP . . . . . 160

## LINE DRAWINGS

PAGE

CISSBURY HILL . . . . . 3
AN UPLAND ROAD NEAR CHANCTONBURY . . . . . 8
ASHBURNHAM PARK . . . . . 11
HARDGATE FOREST . . . . . 13
MAP OF FOREST REGIONS SOUTH OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS . . . . . 14
THE SOURCE OF THE MEDWAY, TURNER'S HILL . . . . . 15
MAP OF FOREST REGIONS SOUTH OF THREE BRIDGES . . . . . 17
THE BRIDGE, FEN PLACE PONDS . . . . . 18
FEN PLACE PONDS . . . . . 19
IN ASHDOWN FOREST . . . . . 21
TRACES OF THE LAST OF THE SUSSEX IRONWORKS: ASHBURNHAM FURNACE . . . . . 22
CLAYTON MILLS . . . . . 25
OFF BRIGHTON . . . . . 30

PAGE

A Hammer Pond . . . . . 33
Bexhill to Ashburnham Furnace . . . . . 34
Names on Map near Pulborough . . . . . 35
An Old House at Ninfield . . . . . 36
A Rural Riddle: Is this a Relic of Ironworks? . . . . . 37
In the Iron Country . . . . . 39
Ashburnham Forge . . . . . 43
Legh Manor, Cuckfield . . . . . 47
Cuckfield Church . . . . . 51
The Iron Pavement of Wadhurst . . . . . 54
Near Horsham . . . . . 57
A Hammer Pond near Horsham . . . . . 59
In Tilgate Forest . . . . . 62
Forest Country near Crawley . . . . . 63
Furnace Woods . . . . . 65
A Wet Day in Horsham . . . . . 67
Pulborough Church . . . . . 69
Stopham Bridge . . . . . 73
An Old House near Horsham . . . . . 74
Plan of Winchelsea . . . . . 77
Winchelsea from the Toll Gate, Rye . . . . . 81
The Entrance to Winchelsea . . . . . 82
The East Gate, Winchelsea . . . . . 83
Winchelsea: the Marshes and Rye To-day . . . . . 84
The Same Scene Four Hundred Years Ago . . . . . 85
The Ruined Mill of Winchelsea . . . . . 87
The Priory Ruins, Winchelsea . . . . . 90
German Street, Winchelsea . . . . . 91
In the High Street, Winchelsea . . . . . 92
West Gate, Winchelsea . . . . . 93
Camber Castle . . . . . 94

PAGE

HEADING TO "THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS" . . . . . 97
AT PULBOROUGH . . . . . 99
THE SOUTH DOWNS FROM PULBOROUGH . . . . . 100
FROM HARDHAM . . . . . 101
A COTTAGE IN STANE STREET . . . . . 103
THE MOUNTAINS OF SUSSEX . . . . . 105
BIGNOR MILL . . . . . 107
THE HILLS FROM SUTTON . . . . . 111
A HAMMER POND NEAR PETWORTH . . . . . 113
MAP OF HAMMER PONDS NEAR PETWORTH . . . . . 115
A COTTAGE AT BIGNOR . . . . . 117
NEAR PETWORTH . . . . . 119
TAIL-PIECE: "THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS" . . . . . 124
CUCKMERE HAVEN . . . . . 127
HURSTMONCEUX . . . . . 131
THE STAR, ALFRISTON . . . . . 137
THE ROAD TO HAWKHURST . . . . . 141
MAP OF HAWKHURST AND COAST . . . . . 143
GREAT WIGSELL . . . . . 145
BODIAM CASTLE FROM THE ROTHER . . . . . 146
BODIAM CASTLE: INTERIOR, MAIN GATEWAY . . . . . 147
BODIAM CASTLE FROM THE HILL . . . . . 149
OLD FIGURE-HEAD, STAR INN, ALFRISTON . . . . . 150
WINCHELSEA . . . . . 153
PEVENSEY CASTLE . . . . . 157
MAP OF PEVENSEY LEVELS TO-DAY . . . . . 160
MAP OF PEVENSEY WHEN SEA COVERED THE "LEVELS" . . . . 160
PLACE-NAMES BY MARESFIELD . . . . . 161
MAP: CHICHESTER AND PAGHAM . . . . . 163
OFF CHICHESTER . . . . . 165
A HASTINGS FISHING BOAT . . . . . 166

PAGE

ORDNANCE PLACE . . . . . 169

PLACE-NAMES CONCERNING IRON . . . . . 172

MEMORIAL SLAB IN WADHURST CHURCH . . . . . 173

MAP: ORDNANCE PLACE AND CINDERFIELD WOOD . . . . . 173

A CORNER OF WADHURST . . . . . 175

A WOODLAND MYSTERY NEAR BUXTED . . . . . 181

HUGGETT'S FURNACE . . . . . 182

HEADING TO "THE IRON GHOST" . . . . . 185

LITTLE FORGE . . . . . 187

MAP SHOWING MYSTERIOUS CUTTING LEADING DOWN A STEEP HILL FROM DENTURE SHAW TO HUGGETT'S FURNACE . . . . . 201

IN THE ROCK COUNTRY OF NORTH-EAST SUSSEX . . . . . 203

# I

# A SONG OF THE SAXONS

Here through the long unhampered days
  The tinkling silence thrills;
Or little lost, Down churches praise
  The Lord who made the Hills;
But here the Old Gods guard their round
  And, in her secret heart
The heathen kingdom Wilfrid found
  Dreams, as she dwells apart.

KIPLING.

CISSBURY HILL.

## A SONG OF THE SAXONS

THE filial devotion of a tourist passing through Steyning wheeling his mother in a wheelbarrow would probably attract very little comment in these highly civilized days of ours. He would either be walking to Brighton for a wager or doing it for "the pictures." In the ninth century, however, when the world had not advanced quite so far, the spectacle of St. Cuthman taking his aged mother for a personally conducted tour in Sussex was one that was received with hilarity by a party of haymakers working in a field through which he passed. Their ill-timed mirth, nevertheless, provoked the wrath of heaven and a sudden storm of rain destroyed their hay. Local tradition says that the same thing has happened in the same field periodically ever since and still happens to-day. Probably true.

The good man was pulling the barrow by means of a cord, and when this broke he improvised one of stranded twigs. I have forgotten the exact details of the story, but I believe it was the breaking of this cord that gave the final touch of comedy to an already amusing turn—a sort of Charlie Chaplin finale that appealed to the gallery.

The Saint persevered, but when, at the very place where the church at Steyning now stands, his second rope broke, he took it to be a sign that he was to stay there. So he fashioned a hut for his mother and another for himself and then proceeded to build a church.

This church was undoubtedly a fact, whatever embellishments have crept into the story of its foundation. It was known as St. Cuthman's chapel and Steyning as St. Cuthman's Port. No less a person than Ethelwulf, the father of Alfred the Great, was buried here, although later his body was taken to Winchester.

Steyning is now so quiet and out of the world, in spite of a railway station on its flank, that one could easily forget its importance in the Saxon world of long ago: A flourishing port with busy quays, a town of fame in the commercial world, and boasting a mint; it was a place where Alfred the Great held important estates.

I do not know whether Alfred the Great lived here when he was a boy. It is probable that he did, and as then the quiet meadows we see to-day were great tidal arms of the channel bearing stately ships too and fro upon their waters. It may have been here, in the green fields of Steyning, that his first

thought of *sea-power* began to grow, a thought that made not only Alfred Great, but England too.

The idea of attacking an invading enemy before he landed, instead of waiting for him to organize himself for battle on shore, seems obvious enough to us, but it was then an experiment. One, moreover, that proved so successful in resisting the Danes, that it led to the adoption of naval power as the first line of defence. Had Alfred's successors kept up and developed this new weapon, the Conqueror might never have landed and English history have been strangely different.

It has been written of Steyning, that to have brought the Conqueror over is more original and more daring than to have come over with him. The riddle is a difficult one to read, until it is made clear that Edward the Confessor gave some of this Sussex land to the Abbey at Fécamp in Normandy, and Harold took it away again. William, Duke of Normandy, determined to stick to his rights, and it was to regain his possessions, as much as for any other reason, that the Conqueror determined on his invading expedition.

I begin this story of travels with a sketch-book, on a cold but sunny day in winter at three of the clock, on a roadside between Bramber and Steyning. How I got there and what technical difficulties assailed my friend's car might possibly interest motor enthusiasts, but it will probably bore anybody else, so I will cut a long story short and relate that I basely abandoned my friend, got out and walked and determined to make for Worthing by the high track over the hills and far away.

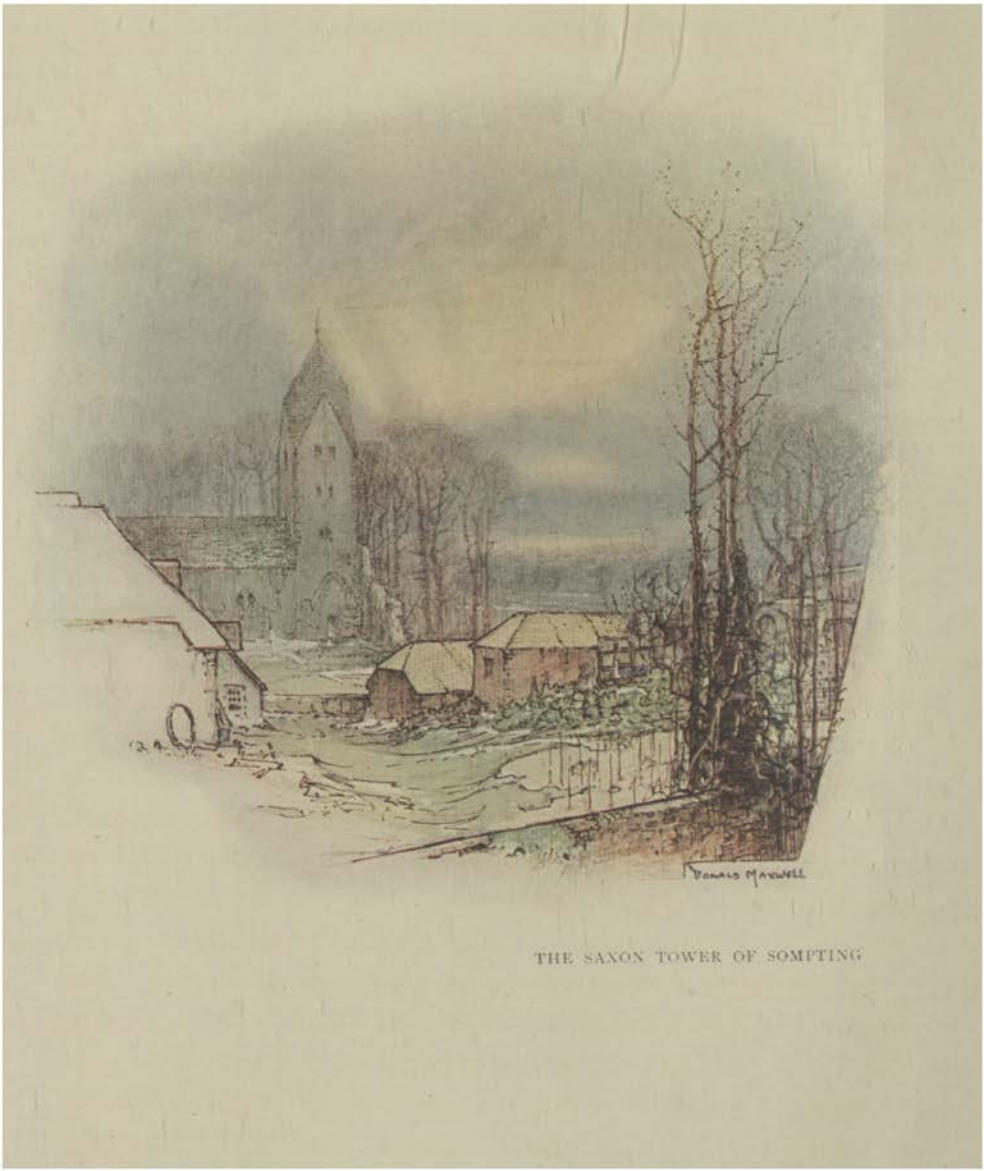
There was snow about. Bramber looked quite Christmas-

cardy with its clustered cottages and castled crag. Steyning lay chequered in grey and russet below as I climbed the steep ascent of the borstel. [Note the word *borstel* like the Kentish *borstal*—generally a road up a chalk hill. Compare Borstal, Bostall, etc.]. Above me, overlooking the broad Weald, swelled the great billow of Chanctonbury.

Here, as all along the downs, the steepest country is to the north. The general effect of these hills always seems to me that of a long wave gradually piling itself up to spread out upon a gently shelving beach. Viewed from the coast their height is not very apparent, but viewed from the Weald they seem to rear themselves up, and get steeper and steeper as if ready to break. Alter the colour scheme and let trees become white and you can see the effect of the wave crumbling and preparing to join the foam-flecked swirlings in the trough of the Weald.

It was cold up there, but the wide sweep of bare country, mellowed by the light of the winter sun and barred with purple shadows was good to look upon. The great rampart of Cissbury formed the western sky-line, from which rose tumbled masses of cumulous clouds.

This hill is said to take its name from Cissa, son of Ælla. It is also said that the earthworks and forts are pre-Saxon, although the Saxons may have occupied them and given their names to it. Many conjectures have been made about the origin of all these earthworks—all are more or less guesswork. They are Druidical and religious some say, or they are British, Roman, Saxon. Probably they are all these in succession.




THE SAXON TOWER OF SOMPTING

There is a distinct and unmistakable flint weapon factory, and Cissbury might be called the Sheffield of the flint age. There are also to be found on the sunlit terraced slopes known as Vineyard Hill, unmistakable evidence of the cultivation of the vine.

It is interesting to remember that it is the cheapness of freight as well as the warm climate that has made the wines of France and Portugal supersede our own vintages. The difficulties and cost of transport in British, Roman, and Saxon times and later, right up to the Renaissance, acted as a kind of "protection" to the English wine growers. The names on our maps, both in town and country, tell us much. In Abingdon is the *vineyard* and in Rochester the *Vines*. Indeed, the wine of Rochester, tuned up to a very splendid ruby by means of blackberries, was in such demand that it used to be exported to France! Domesday Book tells of vineyards in Kent, Hampshire, Dorset, Hertford, Middlesex, Norfolk, and Suffolk.

A few more miles along the bleak height and then begins a descent towards Worthing and the coast. Some trees, a head and a low sun. Then a turn in the road and I am far away in a quaint little Rhineland village. I climb the bank and take in the prospect from a more open point of view. There across some kitchen gardens and old walls stands a church with a curious gabled tower, no vision merely of our Saxon forefathers, but builded in reality, as large as life, amongst the trees, with the sun going down beyond it, into the dim fringes of the sea.

Of course there is nothing really remarkable about this tower. To the traveller, in many parts of South Germany it would be a familiar enough object. The element of surprise which it causes is geographical rather than architectural. The Saxon architecture, such as it was, to a large extent was destroyed and rebuilt at the Conquest, and consequently few examples remain, while across the water they have survived. As a village church tower, dating from the time before the Normans came, this ancient belfry is unique in England, a poem of our land. It has a haunting quality like some far-away melody borne across the changing tides, a dream of old England, of Merrie England long ago. It is a Song of the Saxons.

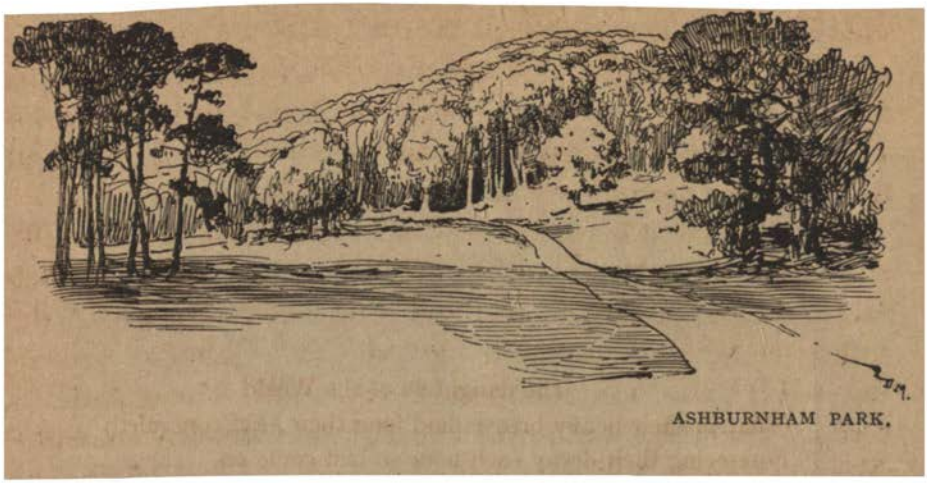
AN UPLAND ROAD NEAR CHANCTONBURY.

# II

# IN THE FORESTS OF EAST SUSSEX

The daughters of the Weald
(That in their heavy breasts had long their grief concealed)
Foreseeing their decay each hour so fast come on,
Under the axe's stroke, fetched many a grievous groan,
When as the anvil's weight, and hammer's dreadful sound,
Even rent the hollow woods and shook the queachy ground.

DRAYTON.



ASHBURNHAM PARK.

# IN THE FORESTS OF EAST SUSSEX

SOMEWHERE in the Eastern Alps—I forget the name of the place—travellers are shown a church the roof of which plays a very remarkable part in the scheme of things geographical. Not only is it a roof. It is also the watershed between two rivers. The rain that falls upon one side runs down into the Black Sea and that which falls upon the other side into the Mediterranean. No doubt, the good curé of the village has often improved the occasion when the steady patter of mountain rain is heard overhead, rain that the roof prevents falling alike upon the just and upon the unjust in his flock. He can moralize upon the vast consequences that may result from small decisions.

There is no exact parallel in Sussex to this fate-determining church roof. The padre at Worth could not find quite so obvious a lesson for his congregation in the countryside around him, yet on a small scale the forest region hard by plays very much the same part in this corner of old England as the classic example we have recorded plays abroad.

In the eastern border of Worth Forest, near Turner's Hill, there rise three rivers within a few hundred yards of each other, flowing north and east and south. One becomes " the sullen Mole, that runneth underneath " joining " royal-towered Thame " at Hampton Court. The second finds its way by Tonbridge and broadens out into " Medway smooth." (We still stick to Milton for our adjectives.) The third, finding its way to the Channel by Lewes and Newhaven, is the Ouse.

It was in tracing the source of the Medway that I first made a study of this region of woods and wilds. The Medway took a lot of tracing, for when the explorer gets anywhere near the source, he is met by many little anticipated difficulties, the principal being that no one seemed to know where in the least the Medway *did* rise. Or, to be more accurate, every one knew where it *did* rise, but the one and only place was in so many different directions.

It may be that some of my readers may remember a series of papers that I edited in *The Yachting Monthly* during the war. They appeared under the title, " A True and Authentic Account of Lieut. Blank's Discovery of the Source of the River Medway." The identity of this famous explorer was one of the most jealously guarded secrets of the Naval Intelligence

THE FIRST MILL ON THE MEDWAY

HARDGATE FOREST.

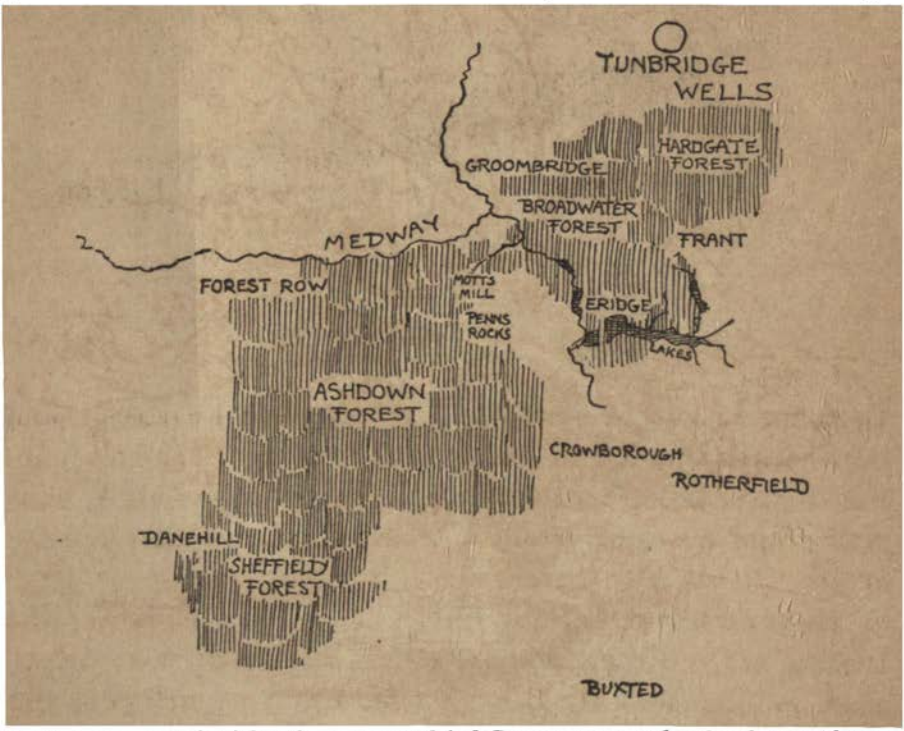
Department and no clue could be obtained by the general public as to who it was, owing to the fact that the only published portrait represented that worthy in a gas mask, thus giving him a strong family likeness to many other unsung heroes.

However, now that the disclosure will not endanger the Defence of the Realm, and since I am disinterested enough to claim nothing from the Government, I may as well proclaim the fact that the editor and the explorer are one and the same person.

Although it is a twice-told tale, I will give a summary of my explorations, separated from the element of extravaganza in which they were involved.

The Medway was finally tracked to its veritable source in a wood on Turner's Hill.

Here is a sketch of the spot where the spring wells up. A small basin made of cement (a material singularly appropriate to act as the cradle of the river) has been fashioned by

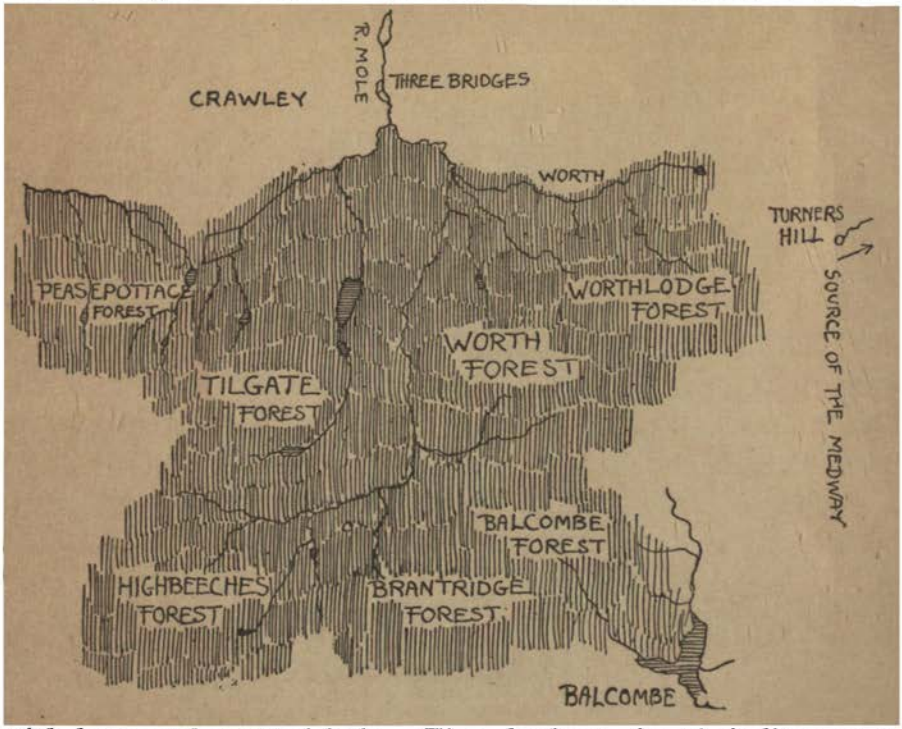



some one, probably the proverbial Scotsman, who had got there before me.

I had tracked the stream up from the Fen Place Ponds, sketched here, and from an old building which proved to be an old and disused mill, the first mill on the Medway. I

THE SOURCE OF THE MEDWAY,
TURNER'S HILL

found a very overgrown region round these ponds and incidentally heard of an adventure. Some children of whom I had been inquiring as to footpaths, told me a fearsome story of a monster that they had seen on returning from school. It was, they asserted, a " water boar," something like a bear




with long and matted hair. They had run for their lives and told some incredulous men of the apparition. No one believed them, but they stuck to their story. Finally, a hunt was organized and an enormous animal shot—some sort of wild boar. It appears that some years before, a neighbouring

enclosure had contained such beasts. It was thought, however, that they had all been accounted for. One, however, must have escaped and been living in the dense jungle growth in the neighbourhood of these ponds. It had grown up into a huge beast. In a less matter-of-fact age it would no doubt have done duty as the legendary dragon ravaging the countryside.

Before reaching this authentic branch of the river, I followed up a great number of false clues. One of these was in the direction of Eridge. An important tributary stream comes down to Groombridge by some picturesque cliffs and waterworn rocks. Lieut. Blank's sensational discovery of the "*Falls of the Medway*" took place on this branch of the stream. I have sketched the scene here, and beg to remind the Royal Geographical Society that now the identity of the discoverer is known, there is no reason why their medal should still be withheld.

The various forests of Sussex are the scattered remnants

THE BRIDGE, FEN PLACE PONDS.

"THE FALLS OF THE MEDWAY" AT ERIDGE

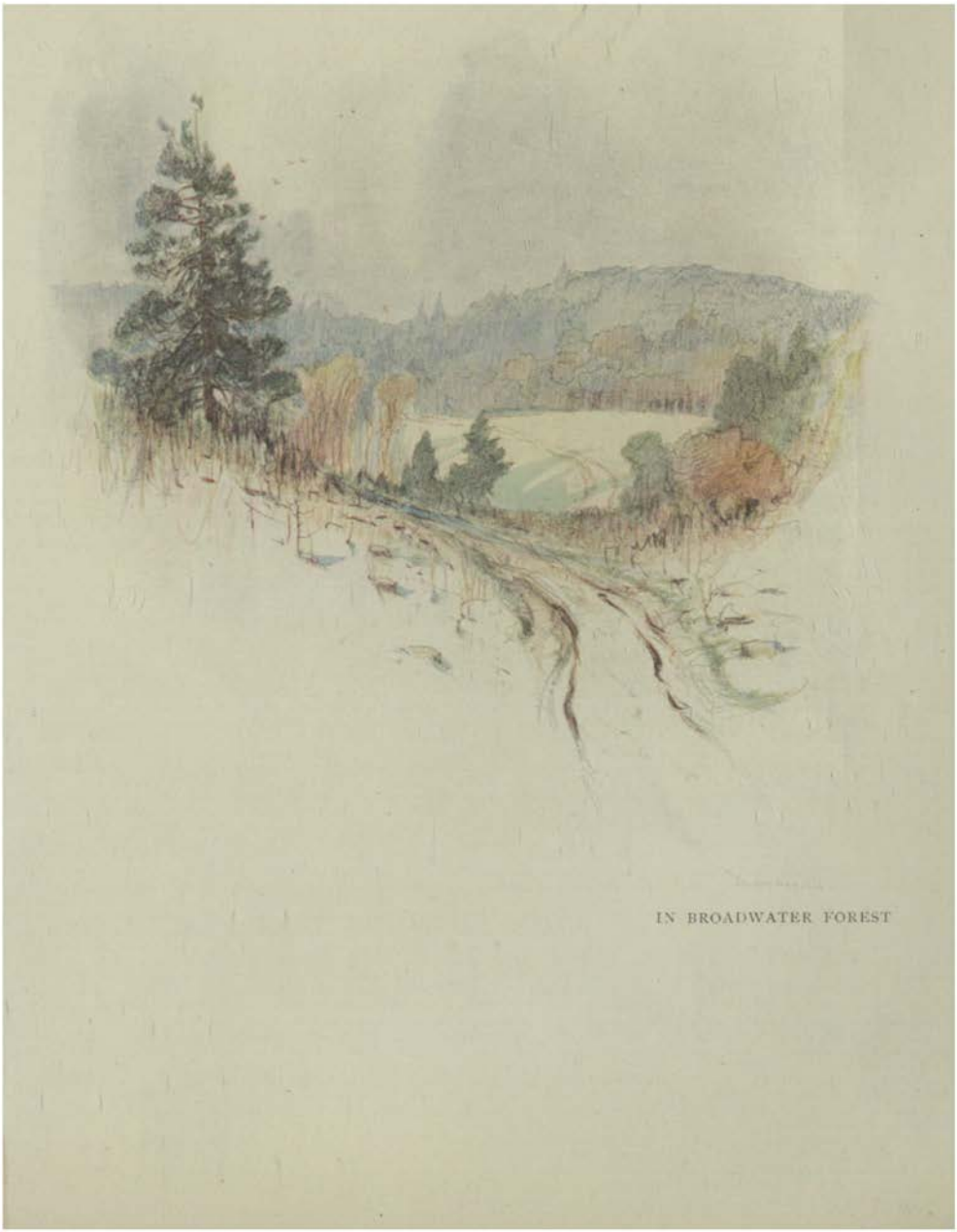
FEN PLACE PONDS.

of the great Forest of Anderida that stretched from Kent through Sussex into Hampshire, to South Surrey and the North Downs on the north and the South Downs on the south, in all about 120 miles by 30. The northern belts, known as the forest ridge, must always have been dense woodland, but the southern and central portions were chequered with a good deal of open heath. The Weald is often described as a wilderness, "impenetrable by man or beast," but this is probably a picturesque exaggeration. There are tracts of land which at no time would have been woodland, and this legend of utter impenetrability of the reigon, which was true enough, was more for want of roads or recognizable tracks, than because of the density of its forest growth.

Not a few conjectures have been made as to the fate of the Conqueror's invading expedition if Harold had retreated through the Weald and lured the Duke of Normandy into a region without roads and without food, instead of showing fight. Even assuming that the English army could have sustained itself for long in such an inhospitable region as the Weald is supposed to have been, there is no reason to suppose that history would not have repeated itself. When the Saxons held the coast of South Sussex, the British retreated into the forests of the Weald. The invaders, however, "dug themselves in," and fortified the South Downs. In vain did the Britons try to lure them into the unknown region of the forest. From the fastnesses of the Weald they made brave and desperate attacks upon the invaders, but were defeated and finally, according to Saxon accounts, exterminated to a man.

At the Conquest Sussex was divided into six sections, known as Rapes. These extended in oblong tracts from south to north, each having a sea-coast with port, a river, an inland town, and a region of forest densest at the northern extremity. In fact, for a long time this hinterland was almost a *terra incognita*. It was penetrated in places by the smelters of iron and the hewers of wood, but by practically no one else. At Maresfield, Framfield, and Chiddingly there are undoubted traces of the Romans working this iron country, and Well Street, the wood road, is evidence of their activities, still upon the map.

The man who cleared portions of this woodland, thus



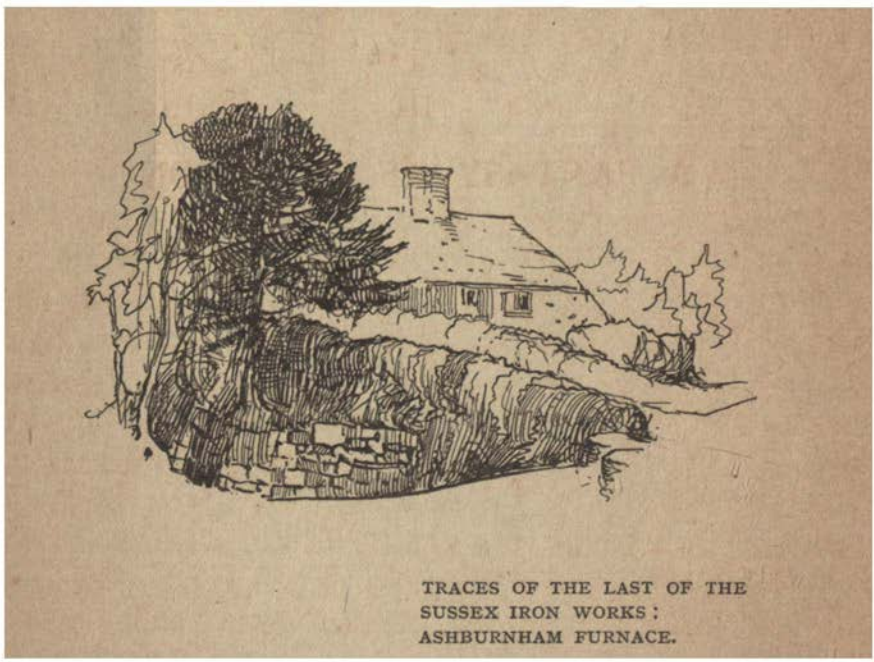
IN BROADWATER FOREST

IN ASHDOWN FOREST.

rendering it possible for cultivation, was regarded as a benefactor to the community. The fact that the Weald was exempted from the tithe on wood, levied elsewhere, is some indication of this attitude towards the forest region. At a later date, however, in the time of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, various laws were passed for the protection of the forests. The inroads of the iron industry had made such havoc of the woods that grave fears were voiced in different quarters. People could not write to the papers about it then, but they wrote to each other, and some of these letters still exist. Danger to our maritime supremacy was foreseen in the coming lack of wood for shipbuilding, and Archbishop Parker writes in alarm to Queen Elizabeth concerning the growth of ironworks in the Weald and the consequent inroads made by the iron-masters on the woods and forests for fuel.

At last some sort of protective afforestation was devised and so many trees per acre were to be left standing when large areas were depleted.

The substitution of the use of coke instead of wood charcoal in the iron-smelting industry, however, did more for the woodlands than any act of Parliament, and it was in 1825 that the last fire in the last iron furnace in Sussex died down for good.



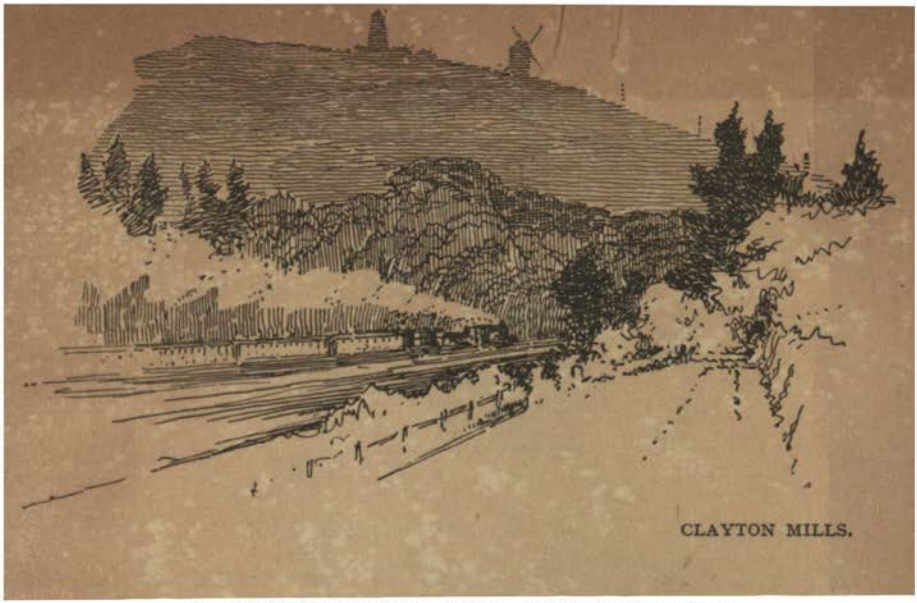
TRACES OF THE LAST OF THE SUSSEX IRON WORKS: ASHBURNHAM FURNACE.

# III

# A FANTASY OF BRIGHTON

" A good mile further, going along the beach, I arrived at Brighthemstead, a large, ill-built, irregular market town, mostly inhabited by sea-faring men, who choose their residence here, as being situated on the main, and convenient for their going on shore, on their passing and re-passing in the coasting trade. The town is likely to share the same fate with the last, the sea having washed away the half of it ; whole streets being now deserted, and the beach almost covered with walls of houses, being almost entire, the lime or cement being strong enough, when thrown down, to resist the violence of the waves. The church is situated on the downs, at a furlong distance from the town ; it is large, but nothing about it worthy of remark, or in the town ; there not being any person of fortune in the town, but one Masters, a gentleman of good birth."—JOHN WARBURTON, 1720.

THE LIGHTS OF BRIGHTON



CLAYTON MILLS.

# A FANTASY OF BRIGHTON

I HAVE long ago given up the idea that one place is more paintable than another. So much depends upon what element the painter is seeking. In certain moods the most perfect pictorial material will suggest nothing, and in certain lights matter-of-fact and unromantic places will become wonderlands of fancy. I have seen Venice look stupid and I have watched the gasholders on Bugsby Marsh transform themselves into poems of delicate beauty.

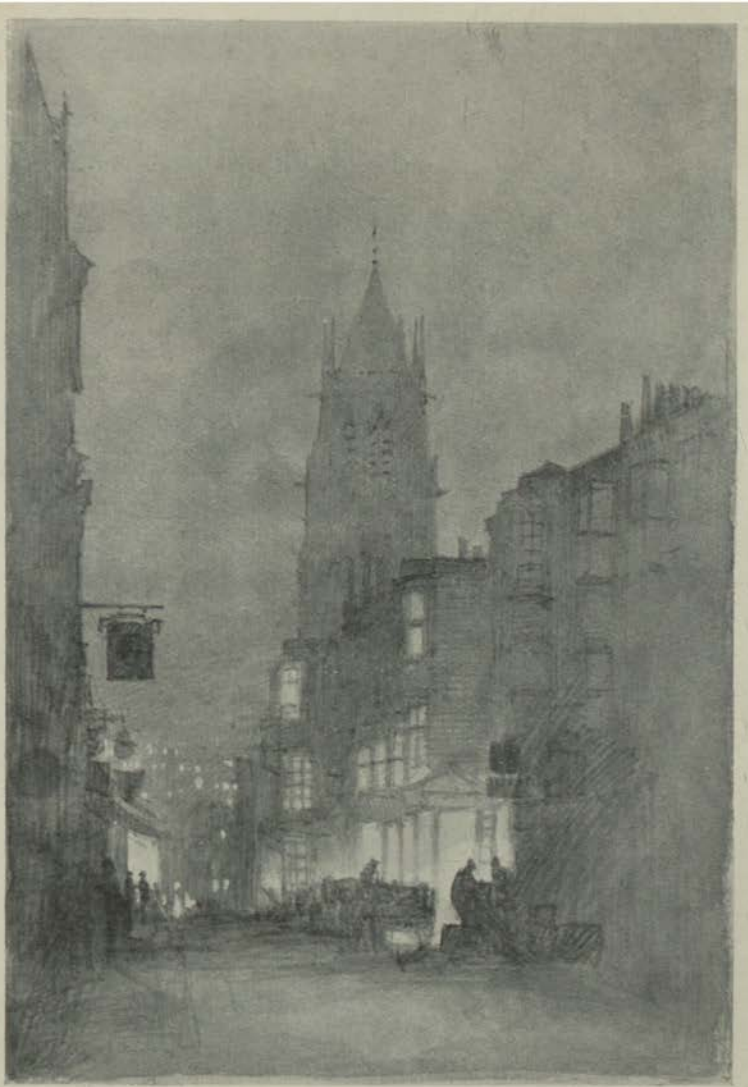
Strange things can happen in a changing light, and it is one of the compensations of our uncertain and uncomfortable climate, that it gives us a greater range of colour effects than that of any land in the world. Brighton is a town in which one would not ordinarily expect to find either the romance of

the Middle Ages or the glamour of the East, but I am opening my sketch-book to you yet again to bear witness to the fact that a journey to Brighton can be the gate to an Arabian Nights entertainment if you will open your eyes to see.

Of the thousands who live in Brighton and travel up to town and back again every day, I suppose there are none who do not recall the glimpse of two windmills on the high ridge by Hassocks, seen for a few seconds before the train plunges into a tunnel. I saw them a short time ago, when a low moon was climbing into the sky from behind the steep down, and have sketched them here.

There must have been a sort of magic about that night, for on arriving at Brighton, I tumbled upon a scene straight out of the Middle Ages, with a few electric lights thrown in. A steep street descending the hill and a massive spire, dim and mysterious against the night sky. It might have been a scene in Nuremburg or in some old city of Bohemia, but it was none other than our old friend West Street, Brighton. The fates were evidently well disposed towards picture finders, so I determined to take a boat out to sea. At all times Brighton looks splendid on the night horizon—two piers and a front four miles long, all blazing with lights.

The sea was smooth and I was not disappointed. The high ground of hilly Brighton stood out dark but spangled with a thousand lamps. The long line of massive buildings, dominated by the Metropole and Grand, stretched like a fortress wall from east to west, dim ramparts of a city of light, fringed with fire. From Hove and the West Pier, by the golden-



A NOCTURNE OF WEST STREET, BRIGHTON

domed Palace over the water, by the Pavilion and Aquarium to High Kemp Town, was one great, golden constellation of scintillating lights, a nocturne of strange beauty. Faint sounds of merry music floated across the rippling waters.

It was an apotheosis of Brighton which lay like a cluster of jewels set in the deep-toned night blue of sea and sky.

I know that I am asking for trouble with the reviewers of this book inasmuch as I have included Brighton in this medley of Unknown Sussex. They will declare that they have heard of Brighton and hardly need my book to find it. Yet I purpose in these Sussex rambles to leave out nothing which has something rare or unnoticed about it, even though these things may be seen in so popular and populous a place. For instance, I made the sketch of West Street (p. 28) standing in the road, under police protection (otherwise I should have been crushed by curiosity or run over), because there was undoubtedly a mediæval quality about the scene, and surely that is unknown Brighton if not unknown Sussex. I think the policeman, for all his courtesy and good will, thought that I was mad, and the general public undoubtedly did.

I have often been laughed at for asserting that Brighton is picturesque. I do not mean the picturesque "bits" of old world and often isolated samples of the past. I mean the bigger views.

Time was when the little fishing village of Brighthelmstone was picturesque in the original and obvious sense of the word. Hidden away between the sea and the Downs it was a quaint place as old engravings and pictures show, nor was it associated

with opulence, if the account of Dr. John Burton is not overdrawn in its pessimism (1751).

" It is not indeed contemptible as to size, for it is thronged with people, though the inhabitants are mostly very needy and wretched in their mode of living, occupied in the employment of fishing, robust in their bodies, laborious, skilled in all nautical crafts, and, as it is said, terrible cheats of the custom-house officers."

He proceeds to describe the amenities of the night, " intending to sleep."

" But this sweet lulling of the senses was begrudged us by some sailors arriving all night long, and in the middle of their drink, singing out with their barbarous voices, clapping and making all manner of noises. The women also disturbed us, quarrelling and fighting about their fish."

Here is another gem from a writer of 1766. " Brighthelmstone, in the county of Sussex, is distant from London 57 miles, is a small, ill-built town, situate on the sea-coast, at present greatly resorted to in the summer-time by persons labouring under various disorders for the benefit of bathing, and drinking sea-water, and by the gay and polite, on account of the company which frequent it at that season. Until within a few years it was no better than a mere fishing town, inhabited by fishermen and sailors, but through the recommendation of Dr. Russel, and by the means of his writings in favour of sea-water, it is become one of the principal watering-places in the kingdom for the resort of the idle and dissipated, as well as of the diseased and infirm."

A NOCTURNE OF LEWES

But perhaps the best description of the old-time house of the "apartments" order, complete with aspidistra in the front window (or its still more gloomy equivalent of vegetable melancholy), has been left for the pen of Dickens, who, in *Dombey and Son*, thus portrays with feeling a house situated in a steep bye-street at Brighton—"where the soil was more than unusually chalky, flinty, and sterile, and the houses were more than usually brittle and thin; where the small front gardens had the unaccountable property of producing nothing but marigolds, whatever was sown in them; and where snails were constantly discovered holding on to the street doors, and other public places they were not expected to ornament, with the tenacity of cupping glasses. It was not naturally a fresh-smelling house; and in the window of the front parlour, which was never opened, Mrs. Pipchin kept a collection of plants in pots, which imparted an earthy flavour of their own to the establishment. However choice examples of their kind, too, these plants were of a kind peculiarly adapted to the embowerment of Mrs. Pipchin. There were half a dozen specimens of the cactus, writhing round bits of lath, like hairy serpents; another specimen shooting out broad claws, like a green lobster; several creeping vegetables, possessed of sticky and adhesive leaves; and one uncomfortable flower-pot hanging to the ceiling, which appeared to have boiled over, and tickling people underneath with its long green ends, reminded them of spiders—in which Mrs. Pipchin's dwelling was uncommonly prolific."

The enormous growth of Brighton, soon swept away the

quaintness that Turner and Constable knew, but as a compensation the very size of the town with its cliffs of houses and multitudinous lights, presents pictures in some lights equal in many ways to these bygone aspects. I could imagine Turner, with his love of looming architecture and suggestion of infinite detail, delighting in modern Brighton and finding it a pleasant field of fantasy.

# IV

# THE IRON-SEEKERS

1543. "This yeare the first cast pieces of iron that ever were made in England were made at Buckesteed in Sussex, by Rafe Hoge and Peter Bawd."—HOLINSHED.

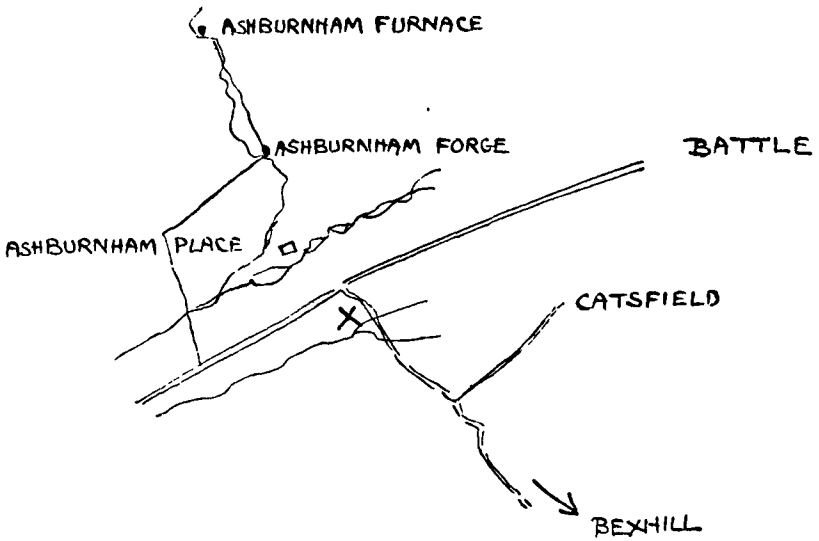
A HAMMER POND

# THE IRON-SEEKERS

I KNEW that Brown would be all out for suggestions when he heard that I was writing on Unknown Sussex. In fact, when I was still tied to London over some work, he had already started off by himself to explore. I was not surprised, consequently, when a telegram arrived early one morning. It had been handed in at Pevensey and read :

Eve of great discoveries. Come at once to Pevensey, even if you can only spare one day. Lord Carnarvon also ran.—BROWN.

Needless to say I could not resist the temptation although I was up to my eyes in something else, so I took the first train

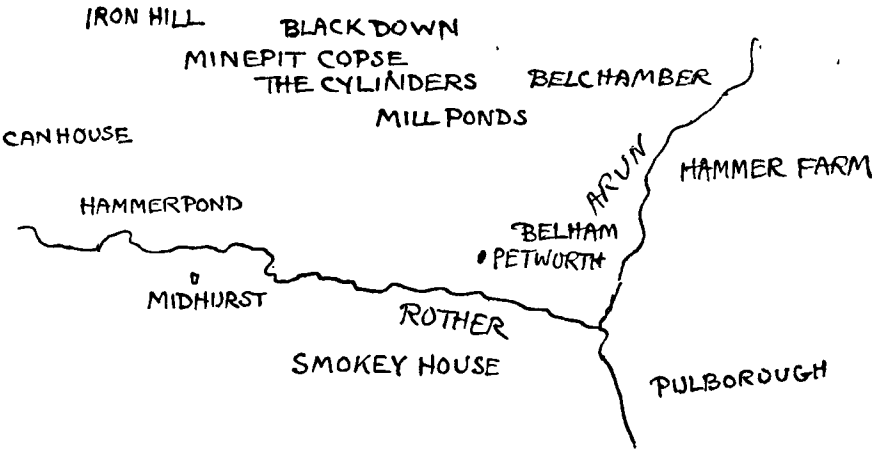



BEXHILL TO ASHBURNHAM FURNACE.

from London Bridge. These are the days for discoveries, and I wondered what Brown was after. It was clear from his facetious allusion to Lord Carnarvon that his anticipated discovery exceeded in importance the opening of the tomb of Tutenkhamen.

Much controversy has raged round Pevensey, and it is still considered by many antiquaries an open question whether Deal or Pevensey saw the landing of Julius Cæsar. Possibly Brown had found a complete chariot containing hitherto unpublished tablets of commentaries on the invasion of Britain. With all his delightful oddities, Brown was distinctly clever, and his escapade of Roman road-finding, which I have recounted in *Unknown Kent*, covered me with notoriety if

not glory in the world of antiquaries. I have received, and still receive, letters of argument and evidence, pro and con, for the truth of his theory of the Lost Road of Kent. Only the other day I was shown new evidence of which I knew nothing at the time, undoubted traces of a Roman villa right on the conjectured road. So allowing for curiosities of technique I really believe in Brown's instinct for discovery.




NAMES ON MAP NEAR PULBOROUGH.

He met me at the station. "Awfully good of you to come. I've got whole chapters for you. You won't mind lunch early. We must get the 'bus from Bexhill to Ninfield at two. No time to be lost or we shan't get through by daylight. You will have to make about six sketches to cover the ground by sunset."

It was characteristic of Brown to give me details even to the sort of sketches I was to make without disclosing the object of our exploration.

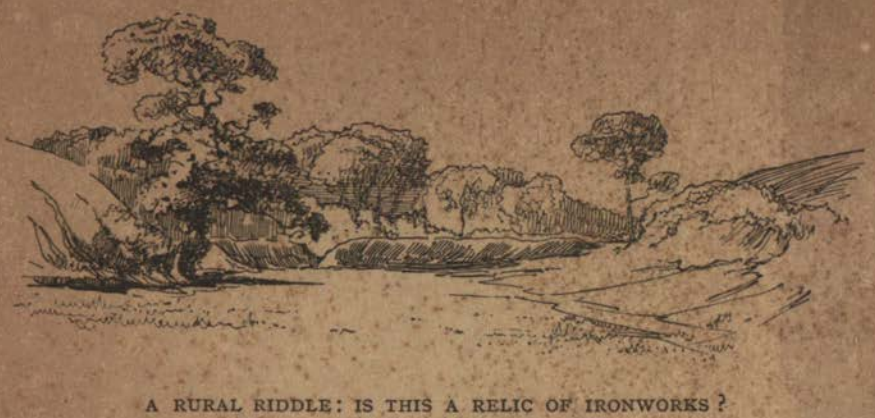
We walked on towards the village, Brown still enlarging on the interest and importance of his undisclosed subject until we reached a small house. Brown had been staying here and he had lunch ready in a room strewn wildly with papers, principally maps.

We sat down at the table, which was about the only space not covered with travel information, and fell to. The meal was a great success. Brown managed to deliver a lecture during its progress and so equipped me a little more for what was to come.

" The greatness of Sussex in the Elizabethan era, and even the greatness of this country in general, depended to a large extent on iron. Had not our ordnance kept pace with the foundries of Spain, we should probably have become a vassal

AN OLD HOUSE AT NINFIELD.

MOTT'S MILL.



A RURAL RIDDLE: IS THIS A RELIC OF IRONWORKS?

state and the history of the British Empire would not have been written.

" In those days the necessities of the maker of ordnance depended on the proximity of ironstone, fuel, and power (*i.e.* water power) in a region suitable for the distribution of the made goods. You must remember the well-nigh impassable nature of the roads for heavy traffic in winter and then consider the geographical possibilities of England. The ideal conditions were found in the Weald. It is true that iron was worked in the Forest of Dean and the Midlands, curiously enough in the very heart of the Black Country of to-day. Well, not curious, when you come to think of it, for forest regions are coal regions. In British times, before the Romans came, most of the iron probably came from these, but it was small stuff easily carried on pack horses.

" Sussex had great advantages over this midland region.

It was accessible by water and near London and the great naval ports. It had not only vast forests for unlimited charcoal, but, what was more important, innumerable streams for water power which was to drive the machinery of bellows and hammers.

"Everybody knows that Sussex once had ironworks, but few realize the extent to which the industry went. When Sussex was the Black Country, there was hardly a village in the region of iron that was not working furnaces and mills.

"Look on a map, and a map is always the first schoolmaster in history, and you will see *iron* written as large as life all over the wonderful valleys and woodlands of the Weald."

By this time Brown was quite excited. Walking up and down and stepping between his maps.

"Take any iron region at random—the part near Petworth, for instance—not by any means the heart of the iron country, and what do you find—names, names, names, the only easily discerned relic of a dead industry? I don't say they are *all* to do with the subject, but look at them—Iron Hill, Blackdown, Smokey House, Minepit Copse, The Cylinders, Belchamber, while Hammer Pond and Hammer Wood, Furnace Farm and the like are as common as blackberries." (The diagram on page 35 shows the position of some of the names here mentioned.)

"I have not got anything larger than a one-inch map of this region, but here is a sheet near Buxted. From Mayfield, making our way more or less west, we come to a place with two or three cottages and haystacks called Ordnance

IN THE IRON COUNTRY.

Place, then there is Cinderhill Wood, Waste Wood, Culver Wood (Culverin ?), Five Chimneys (possibly this is a mare's nest, but we will wait and see), Stonemill Farm, Redbrook (probably named so from the red stains of the iron), Huggett's Furnace, Huggett's Forge, and look, Hogge House—Ralphe Hogge cast the first cannon in England."

Brown's enthusiasm was contagious. I forgot all about Cæsar and Tutenkhamen and started off on a quest of the last furnace in Sussex, which, Brown assured me, was still to be seen at Ashburnham Furnace, the name of a hamlet about three miles north-west of Ninfield.

There we found, first a very picturesque old cottage, and beyond it took a road that led us into delightfully tumbled and wooded country. The hills are steep, leading down to wedge-shaped valleys, ideal for the making of hammer ponds.

"What is that long mound of earth?" I asked Brown as I sketched. Brown whistled.

"A clue," he said. "The plot thickens. I will go and see."

In a few minutes he was shouting in triumph and leaping about on this earthen rampart and urging me to come over at once, as if the thing that looked solid enough would vanish if I did not hurry.

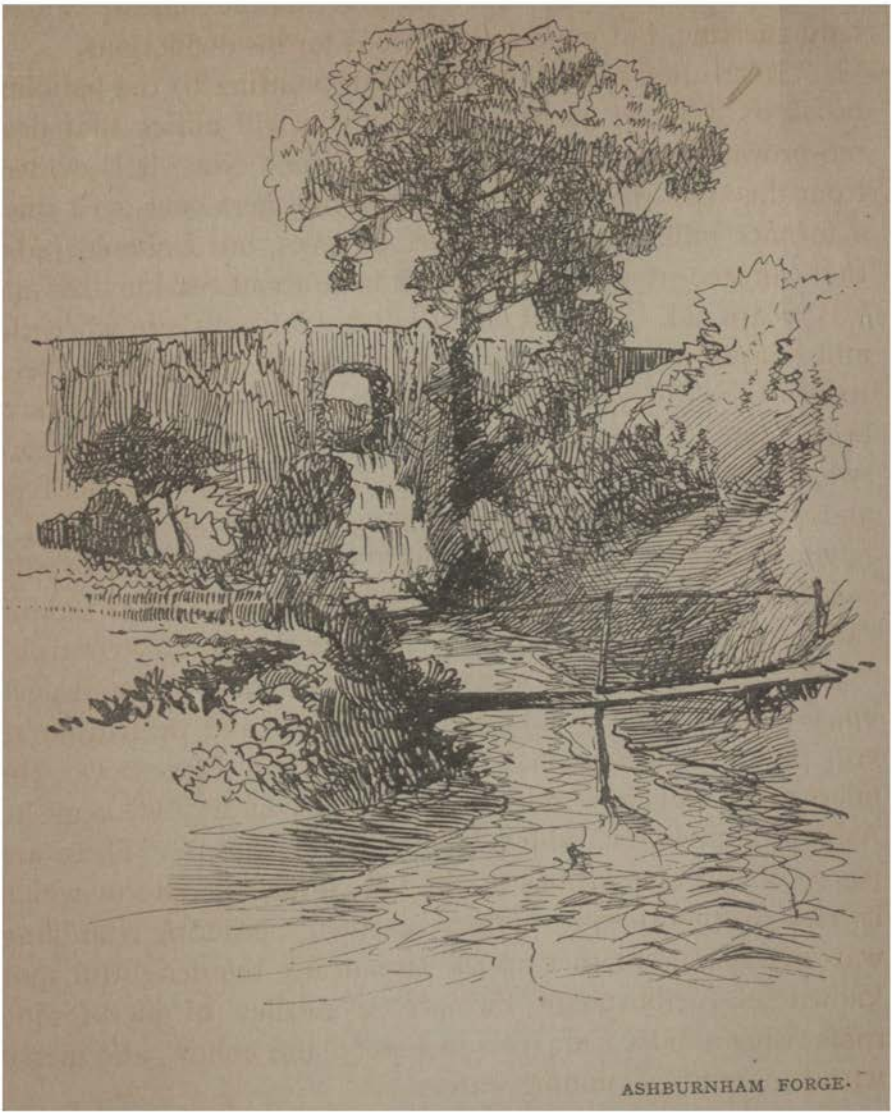
There was no doubt that this had been some sort of dam, and the narrow field between two steep rising slopes might well have been a mill pond.

"An iron furnace stood there, built many centuries ago and closed down about the reign of Charles I.," pronounced Brown, with certainty.

I asked him how he was so positive, and he confessed he was only guessing, but gave good reasons for his deductions.

"In the first place," he observed, pointing to the babbling brook as it raced merrily along, "you will notice that deep red-brown stain. That means ironstone. Now, it is evident from this dam that there has been a mill here once, so I smell a furnace mill. I am no expert on trees, but I should judge that oak tree growing by the brook to be about two hundred and fifty years old. Now, it could not have been there when the mill was in working order, because there would have been 10 feet of water where it is growing. Therefore it must have been planted, or more probably planted itself from an acorn swept down the stream, at a time after the dam had decayed and the water run away. I made a guess at Charles I.'s reign, because it was by Cromwell that many of these mills were destroyed. They generally belonged to the Crown and thus were dangerous things, not under parliamentary control."

We had to leave the mystery unsolved, however, and push on, for the afternoon light was lengthening and we had far to go. Through the grounds of Ashburnham Place, over the lakes and through wonderful woodland country, we came to Ashburnham Forge, which I have sketched here. There are traces of the foundations of the old works, the site of which is now a picturesque cottage garden, bordering tumbling waters. A mile further up the stream lies the delightful spot known as Ashburnham Furnace, a medley of picturesque roofs rising amidst fruit trees in a woodland hollow, and merry with the sound of running waters.



ASHBURNHAM FORGE.

The next bit of exploring work in connection with iron was quite impromptu. I had been making some studies near Cuckfield, being especially taken with the old and new in Legh Manor, a very mellow blend of colour in brick and tile. Here is a sketch of the old house with its tall chimneys. On near approach you will notice, what you miss at first, that some of it is quite modern, but so well designed that the eye is led quite naturally from the old to the new and from the new to the old again without any shocks. I have endeavoured to show this in my sketch made in the afternoon sunlight.

It was on the same afternoon that I found the subject of my note on page 51, at a turn of the road. Whether it was a trick of light or just the general happiness of the grouping I do not know, but I felt bound to draw it. The works of a monumental mason formed the base of the composition with numerous headstones and slabs leaning in rows against the wall.

While I sketched, Brown improved the occasion by interviewing the master mason. It was his idea, to save himself the labour of searching the churchyard and the church for iron monuments and slaps, to ask for information from an expert. It happened, however, that there were no ironworks in this churchyard, nor could Brown hear of hammer ponds nearer than Slaugham, about five miles distant.

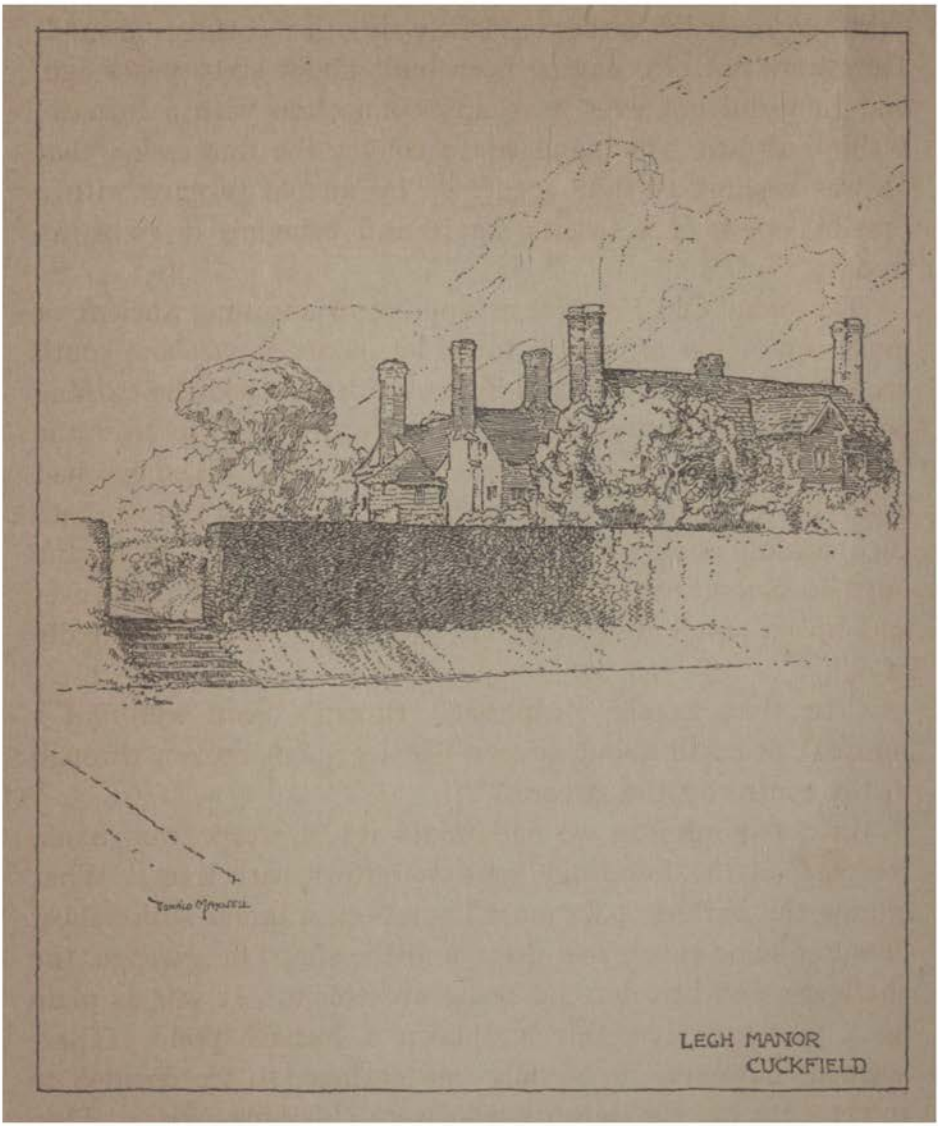
He came back, when I had finished my sketch, with the information that all he could find out concerning ironworks in the immediate neighbourhood of Cuckfield was the name *Old Furnace Cottages* about a mile away. The cottages, however, were spoken of as luxuriously lighted by electric

light and regarded rather enviously by other cottages around. They were not old, having been built about sixty years ago, and they did not ever have any connection with a furnace. I think Brown had managed to convey the impression that he was wishing to take a cottage by an old furnace with a possible view of resuscitating it and bringing it right up to date.

The name Old Furnace as applied to anything ancient or modern was too intriguing to be let alone, so we bore south according to directions, and by footpaths reached the bathing pool on the little river Cuckmere. We were told to cross the stream here and pass a cottage on the left. When we had done this and climbed a steep grass field, we looked down into the bathing pool. This piece of water was located at the bottle-neck exit of a steep and narrowing valley. At the lower end was a small sluice and beyond this a wood, principally of oak.

"In that wood," prophesied Brown, "you will find a rampart of earth about twenty-five feet high broken through in the centre by the stream."

In a few minutes we had found it; a steep grass bank, steepest on the lower side and overgrown with trees. What is now the bathing pool must have been a much larger sheet of water some thirty feet deep, and the shape of a wedge, the shallower and broader end being up stream. It was as plain as a pikestaff that this had been a furnace pond. There seemed, however, to be only one cottage, so we decided to interrogate the inhabitants who were chopping wood. They



LEGH MANOR
CUCKFIELD

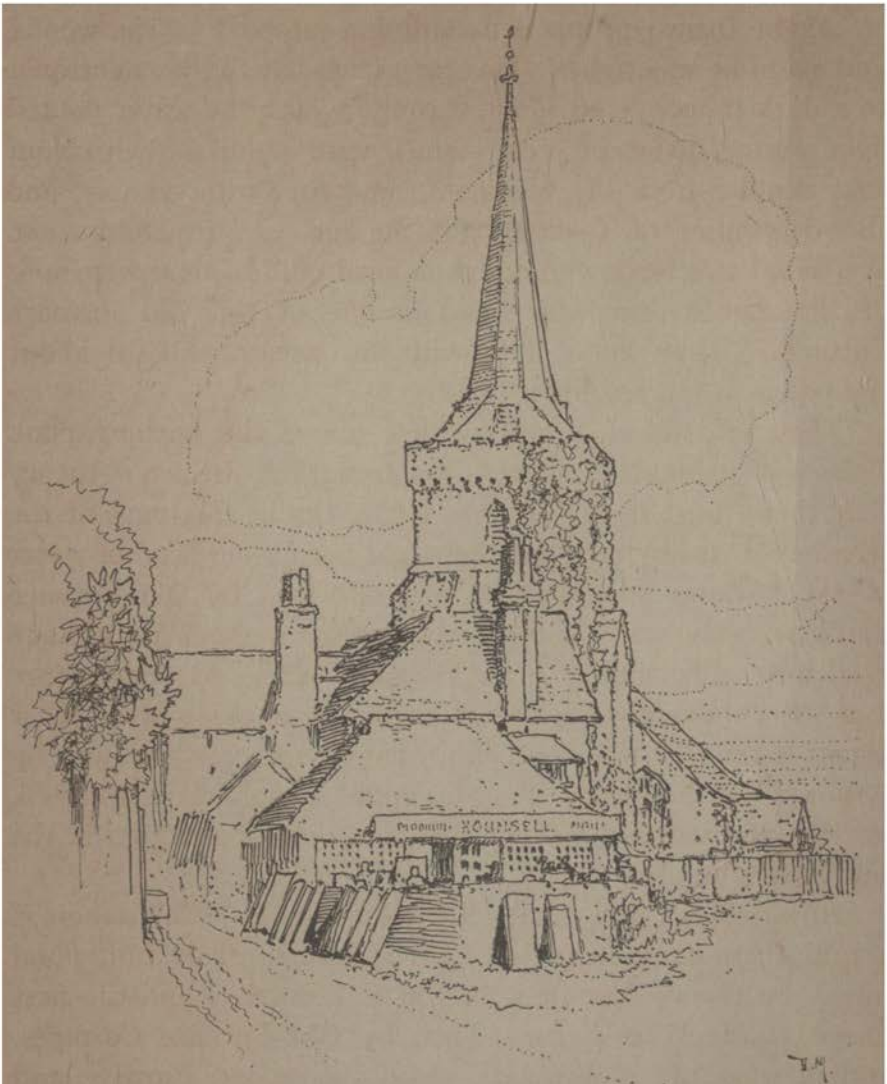
were a picturesque elderly couple who would be ideal models for country-life pictures.

We approached the cottage and were surprised to see number 48 on the door as if it stood in a street. I rather wonder Brown did not start the theory that once a vast city of the lost iron age had existed on this site and that this was the only house left. However, any speculation on his part was cut short by the hospitable couple inviting us in. This was not Old Furnace Cottages, but Mackerel Farm. There was no iron industry there and never had been as long as they had lived there which was just seven years this autumn. The man had been born in Sussex, and had never heard anything about ironworks in these parts. The good lady, however, not wishing to disappoint us, held out some slight consolation. It was only fair to say that for forty-two years previously to their residence in this cottage they had lived at East Grinstead, and it is possible that some one had started iron furnaces during that period, but if so they had been done away with before they came back. Old Furnace Cottages were down in the dip some hundreds of yards on. We could not miss them, but there were no ironworks there either. We thanked them for their good will, and proceeded on our quest. When we came to Old Furnace Cottages, however, we found a valley formation very similar to the one at the bathing pool, with the difference that in this place the water was not artificially kept up, and what might have been a pool was a flat, swampy field. As in the previous case thick woods began at the narrow exit of the stream.

Again Brown prophesied finding a rampart in the woods, and again he was right. This time it was at the very entrance to a dark tree-covered glade through which the water poured over a stony ledge of rock, stained with a dull brown colour that denotes iron. It was now some time after sunset, and the deepening of twilight put an end to our exploration. We found two boys who acted as local guides, they were sons of the gamekeeper who lived in one of the Old Furnace Cottages. They knew all about the stream and all about the ponds in the neighbourhood.

They told us of a mill not far above the bathing pool. This was valuable evidence to strengthen Brown's theory that there must have been *two* ironworks in this part of the stream. It is obvious that there had been a big head of water at the bathing pool. There was also one by Old Furnace Cottages. The name tells us that this lower one must have been the one belonging to the Furnace. If so, of what nature was the pond above, for the furnace by analogy with other places is the first one, as Ashburnham Furnace is followed by Ashburnham Forge? The order might, of course, be inverted, for the relative position might depend on the direction of the supply of iron ore.

However, the mill made all the difference. Where there is a mill there may have been predecessors. This mill pond might be the water-power for the first Furnace and the first Forge at Mackerel Farm. Then by Old Furnace Cottages, and in what are now woods, stood the second Furnace and below that another Forge.



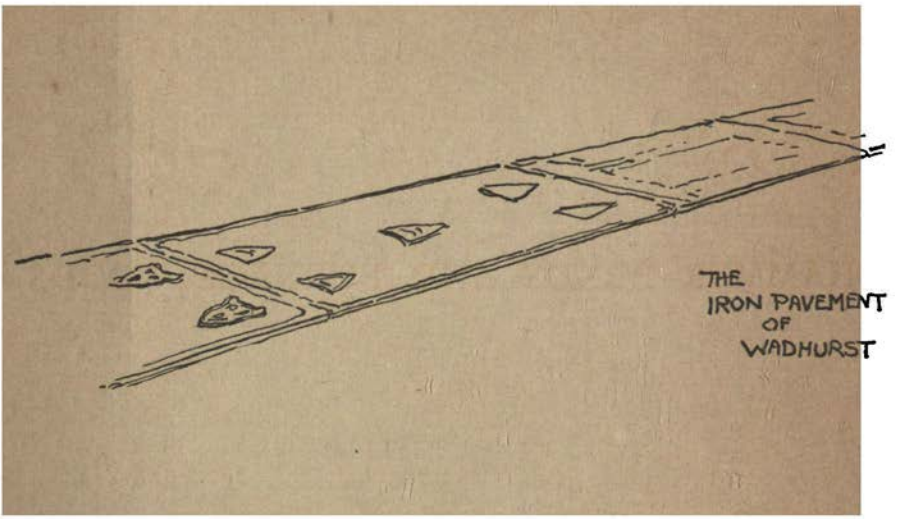
CUCKFIELD CHURCH.

We were unable to pursue our inquiries, however, and up to the date of writing this I do not know whether the lower region of the wood reveals any traces. I hope as time goes on they will not overdo the showman business. The tendency to "write up" mystery places is growing. Only the other day when in Guildford I was told of some remarkable caves underneath the High Street. They were smugglers' caves and catacombs used by the monks and all sorts of wonderful things. Inquiry, however, disclosed the fact that they were nothing more romantic than chalk workings. There had been a quarry for obtaining chalk for building. Chalk at one time was used much more than it is now for masonry. The best material is deep down, and so galleries had been cut running downwards into the deeper chalk; the entrance had been filled up, and when rediscovered they had become a nine days' wonder. Brown egged on the two boys to explore and discover until he should come that way again. He told them also how to make their fortunes by charging half a crown to tourists to take them to the lost ironworks of Henry VIII.

We returned to the main road by a dark path through the woods—the woods that have come into their own again since Michael Drayton lamented their rapid distinction by the iron-masters in his *Polyolbion*:

> "These iron times breed none that mind posterity.
> 'Tis but in vain to tell what we before have been,
> Or changes of the world that we in time have seen;
> When, now devising how to spend our wealth with waste,
> We to the savage swine let fall our larding mast,

But now, alas! ourselves we have not to sustain,
Nor can our tops to shield our roots from rain.
Jove's oak, the warlike ash, veined elm, the softer beech,
Short hazel, and smooth birch, must altogether burn;
What should the builder serve, supplies the forger's turn,
When under public good, base private gain takes hold,
And we, poor woful woods, to ruin lastly sold."



# V

# HAMMER PONDS AND FURNACE WOODS

"It is full of iron mines for the casting of which are furnaces up and down the country, and abundance of wood is yearly spent; many streams are drawn into one channel, and a great deal of meadow ground is turned into ponds and pools for the driving of mills by the flashes, which beating with hammers upon iron, fill the neighbourhood round about, night and day, with continued noise. But the iron wrought here is not everywhere of the same goodness, yet generally more brittle than the Spanish, whether it be from its nature, or tincture and temper; nevertheless, the proprietors of the mines, by casting of cannon and other things, make them turn to good account. But whether the nation is in any way advantaged by them, is a doubt which the next age will be better able to resolve."—CAMDEN.

NEAR HORSHAM.

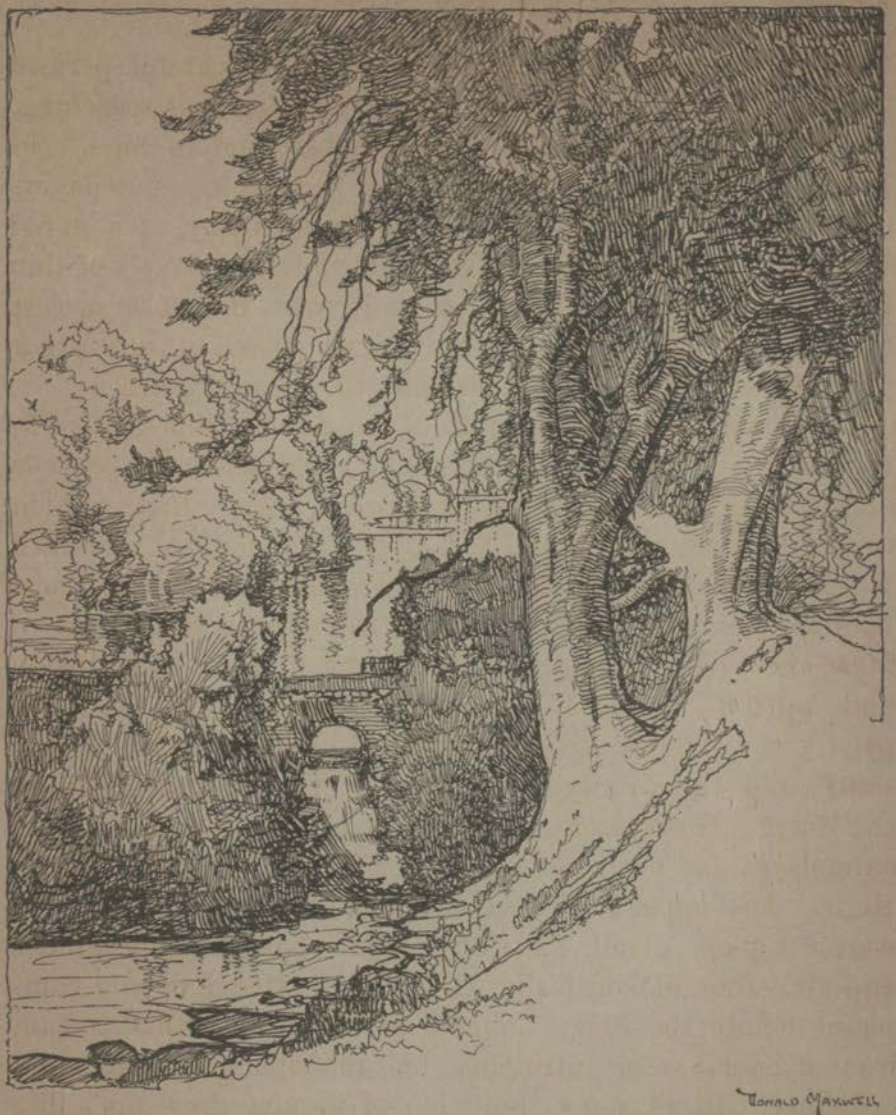
## HAMMER PONDS AND FURNACE WOODS

ONCE Brown had started on the iron theme there was no stopping him. He proposed to me one day that we should wander all over Sussex, or rather in those parts of it where iron can be found, with the one purpose of visiting every hammer pond and furnace wood marked upon the map. I knew Brown's methods and foresaw a wild and utterly unmethodical series of expeditions, but I comforted myself by reflecting that one can see the country just as well looking for hammer ponds and furnace woods as looking for anything else. We already knew a great many

haunts bearing these old-time names, and a careful perusal of a map would keep us more or less from fruitless searching.

It is well to remember that iron is found in Sussex in one of three regions—the Hastings beds, successive layers of clay, shale, and sandstone; the Wealden clay, rich in red ironstone; and the Lower Greensand, containing layers of thin ironstone, often called carstone. It was therefore useless to look for hammer ponds or furnace woods in any other part of Sussex than that containing these formations.

Borrowing the nomenclature of the game of hide-and-seek, the warmest regions for our search would be in the valleys of the Ouse, Cuckmere, and the Rother, with a little sudden rise of temperature in the valley of the Arun and Western Rother near Pulborough and Petworth. Two of the finest hammer ponds in all Sussex, and from the scenic point of view the most magnificent, lie between Petworth station and Sutton End. I have sketched one of them on page 111. The South Downs would end the game on the south, and the county boundaries of Surrey and Kent on the north. Geologically, however, the Wealden iron country extends as far north as Shere in Surrey and Tonbridge in Kent. The upper valley of the Cuckmere seems to be the warmest place of all, for in 1573 the Queen's gun-founder and gun-stone maker, Ralph Hogge of Buxted, lodged a complaint before the Privy Council on the ground that certain iron masters were infringing his monopoly of exporting ordnance. In 1574 a commission of inquiry drew up a list of the ironworks in the Weald. It is exceedingly interesting




A HAMMER POND NEAR HORSHAM.

evidence. I will give a list of the Sussex names, keeping the order of places from west to east on the map:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Petworth | Horsted | Wadhurst |
| Kirdford | East Hoathly | Etchingham |
| Northchapel | Chiddingly | Burwash |
| Ifield | East Grinstead | Brightling |
| Rowfant | Hartfield | Dallington |
| West Hoathly | Withyam | Penhurst |
| Ardingly | Rotherfield | Ashburnham |
| Slaugham | Mayfield | Buckholt |
| Cuckfield | Buxted | Salehurst |
| Horsted Keynes | Waldron | Robertsbridge |
| Maresfield | Warbledon | Mountfield |
| Fletching | Frant | Netherfield |
| Uckfield | Lamberhurst | Battle |
| Framfield | | |

Most of these places are on streams, and water power drove the machinery for bellows in the blast furnaces and hammers in the forges. It is doubtful, however, whether the Romans and Britons used water power at all. The traces of Roman slag heaps at various places have given rise to the assumption that their furnace was built up on a hill where the wind would do the work of the bellows. At Maresfield, for instance, a conical structure was found, probably having contained alternate layers of wood or charcoal and ore walled in with clay. Probably the bellows of blast furnaces, even when this natural draught process had been superseded,

were worked by hand power until about 1300. I came across a description of the use of water, hammer ponds, etc., in a wonderful little work entitled *The Historical Geography of the Wealden Iron Industry*, by M. C. Delany (Benn Bros.), which I will quote.

"The artificial blast, which soon replaced the natural draught at first employed, was supplied by bellows, worked by hand, or by foot, until the fourteenth century, after which

IN TILGATE FOREST.

MAYFIELD

FOREST COUNTRY NEAR CRAWLEY.

water power was substituted, and a blast was obtained by the downward suction of air in a falling column of water. The lump of malleable iron produced in the furnace was then taken to the smithy to be worked, where it was fashioned into shape by hammering. In this process also, water power was introduced before 1496, at which date there was a great 'water-hamor' in the royal works at Ashdown Forest. The hammers used weighed from 1200 to 1500 or even 2500 lbs., and were worked by a rough cog-wheel driven by a stream

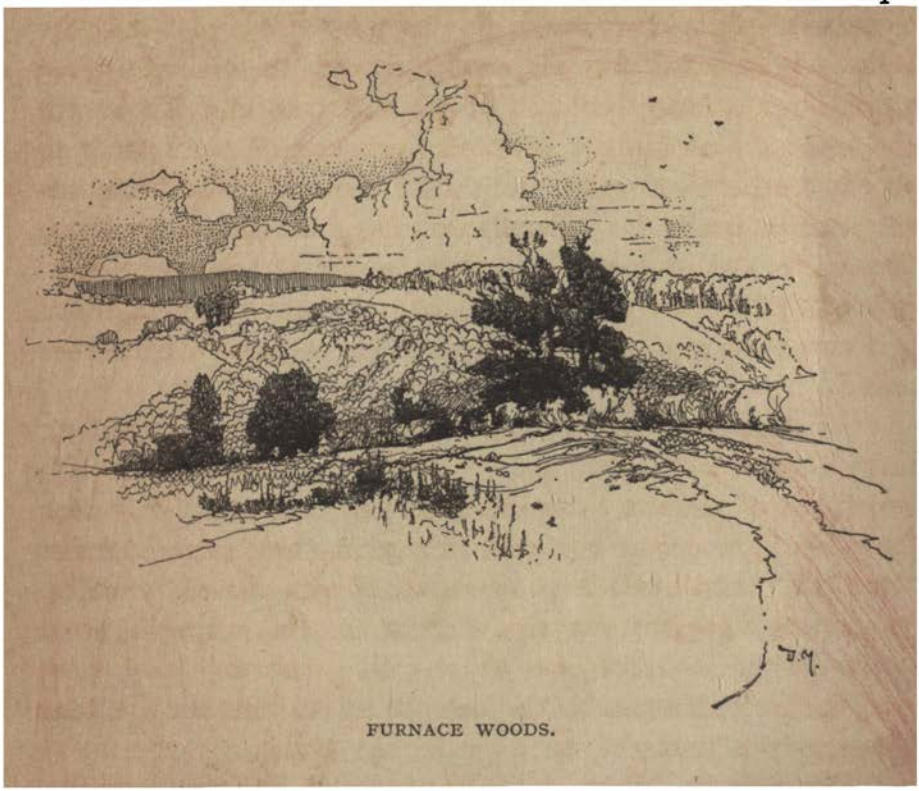
of water. By about the fifteenth century this simple but wasteful process of manufacture was replaced by another, at once more complex and more economical. In order to save fuel and labour, the height of the forges was gradually increased, while the water power now used to work the bellows supplied a pressure strong enough to force the blast up through a longer column of ore and fuel, and the length and intimacy of contact between them caused the former to become carburized or cast-iron, after which it could be reconverted into malleable wrought-iron by reheating if required. The mine was still calcined first as before, and was then carried to the blast furnace, which was built of brick about 24 feet square and 30 feet high, and shaped like a truncated cone."

"Within, the cavity was egg-shaped, measuring 8 to 10 feet, and was lined with sandstone. 'Behind the furnace were two huge pairs of bellows, whose nozzles met at a small hole near the base. These were compressed together by certain buttons, placed on the axis of a large wheel which was turned by water. As soon as these buttons were slid off, the bellows were raised again by the counterpoise of weights, whereby they were made to play alternately, the one giving its blast all the time the other was rising.'"

After a little study of the methods of the crude water-power machinery you will begin to know what to look for.

One of the rules in the game of hammer-pond finding is that one pond nearly always denotes either another on the same stream or traces of one defunct.

The reason of this phenomenon is that an iron mill would have both a furnace and a forge, and the comparatively low power derived from the water-wheel would not be sufficient for both the bellows of the blast furnace and the trip



FURNACE WOODS.

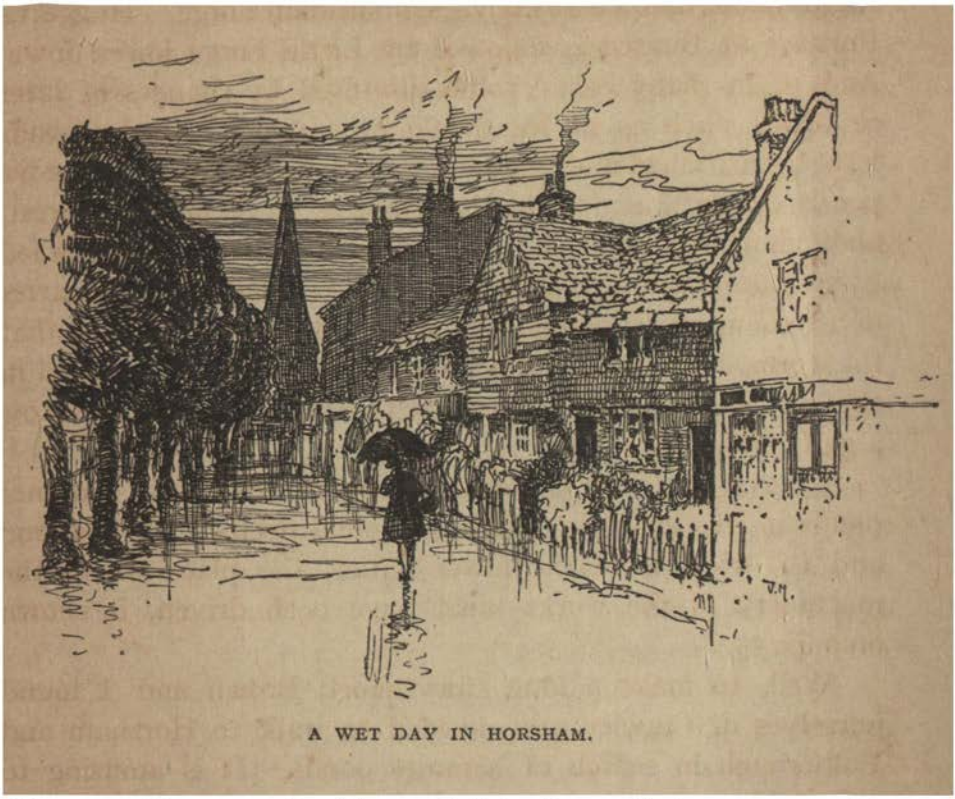
hammers of the forge. The distance between the two ponds is generally from half a mile or further if the valley be steep. To get one " head " of water with a considerable fall meant a long pond in the valley, and the furnace would stand below.

It would not be possible to get another head of water for some distance if the top end of the second pond was to be well clear of the furnace works. A careful study of the map will well illustrate this point. Ashburnham Furnace, as we have seen, stands about half a mile above Ashburnham Forge. Huggett's Furnace at Buxted is followed by Little Forge lower down. And so in many cases, some disguised by changes of later centuries, such as at Heathfield, where many of the ponds have been drained and planted with oziers, chains of successive ponds can be found. On the fringe of St. Leonard's Forest, about four miles east of Horsham, are two hammer ponds fed by two almost parallel streams, and they stand about a quarter of a mile apart. In this case, it might well be imagined that the works, both furnace and forge, could have been situated in the low land between the two, a pleasant region that is now a golf course.

I have sketched the easternmost of these two hammer ponds in this chapter, that of the pond itself in the heading, and the view from the lower outlet, the place where the machinery of the works must have been driven, is shown on page 55.

Well, to make a long story short, Brown and I found ourselves at Crawley and decided to walk to Horsham and Pulborough in search of hammer ponds. It is amusing to reflect that though by means of sketches I can show you in considerable detail where we went, I am rather uncertain of the road we took. I have not a very large scale map, and, if I had, things might not be any clearer. Suffice it to

say that we took a road out of Crawley in a south-westerly direction. On the right, as far as I can make out from the map, lies Peaspottage Forest, and on the left Tilgate Forest. Further on, still to the east, is Worth Forest, and the name



A WET DAY IN HORSHAM.

Furnace Farm on the fringe of this shows that we are on the right track. After a few miles the alternation of woodland and field gave way to wilder country, and the views obtained on the left are sketched variously on pages 62, 63, and 65.

We were too high up at first to find any ponds, but we could see to some extent where they lay, one which we came upon afterwards, glittering through the thick trees, like a river of silver, half hidden. However, as far as Furnace Woods were concerned, the whole region here, although only a few retain the name Furnace, must have been laid under tribute by the iron masters. The name Hammer Wood is nearly as common as Furnace Wood, and Furnace Pond and Forge Pond are variants in the iron-country nomenclature. Cinder-hill Wood is another name, and Waste Wood, harking back to days when this region was more like Nuneaton and the Black Country of our Midlands than it is now with its primrose-carpeted woods and silent glades of green.

After about five or six miles we came to a turn in the road sharp to the left. It descended suddenly, and then came to a sheet of water, which I have sketched at the heading of this chapter. I need not describe it any further, as you can see even from this rough note that it possesses all the charm of many a famous lake advertised as sights for travellers, and yet here, hidden away where no one has ever heard of it, is a beauty spot of the south.

The road is evidently made upon the dam, and a brick arch lets the water through in a tumbling cascade to the stream below. Opposite and below this little lake is a quaint and charming old house (I have sketched it at the end of this chapter) with one of the features which is getting more and more noticeable as we approach Horsham, the stone roof. The forest country could supply timber in unlimited quantity

and of unlimited strength. These old roofs must be enormously heavy, and only under generous conditions in the use of wood could such a construction be possible. Horsham

PULBOROUGH CHURCH.

itself is full of wonderful examples of these roofs. It was raining and getting generally gloomy when we reached Horsham, but my scribbled impression of the approach to

the church shows another of these stone roofs with its picturesque variety of flagstone diminishing in size as they mount up.

But I am going on too fast. A short distance from this Hammer Pond, a few hundred yards on the way to Horsham, is another very similar sheet of water named Hawkins' Pond, fed by another stream, but so placed that it runs parallel with the first one. Below these two ponds and by the old house we have just been admiring is a piece of ground, now part of a golf course, which probably was the scene of a busy iron-mill, furnace-bellows and hammers worked by these two reservoirs above, possibly some of the old house being part of a mediæval Nuneaton.

One of the most amazing tees that I have ever seen is that shown in the sketch, and the player drives off from a high ridge under the beach trees over the stream 20 feet below.

St. Leonard's Forest offers all sorts of ghostly excitement, especially at night. There is a headless horseman who has the disconcerting habit of springing up behind the belated traveller, and riding with him through the forest. It may be that he does this still with belated light cars in the forest by-roads, but no evidence of this is forthcoming. Except that conversation between the traveller and this apparition would of necessity be limited I do not think this would be any great disadvantage to the motorist. The extra passenger having no weight would not increase the consumption of petrol per mile, and thus would have no terrors at all to the modern users of the road.

"GREEN SUSSEX FADING INTO BLUE"

The absence of nightingales is explained by the fact that a hermit who dwelt in the forest long ago was interrupted in his chanting by a company of nightingales. He therefore pronounced a curse upon them, which, unlike that of the Cardinal Lord Archbishop of Rheims, was so effective that no nightingale has dared to sing in the forest since.

The presence of so many lilies of the valley in the quiet glades of this forest is explained by the fact that St. Leonard, who gave it a name, was wounded in a terrific battle with a dragon. After a long struggle, in which for some time the issue hung in the balance, the Saint won and the dragon was slain, but at terrible cost, for the champion of the cross was sorely wounded, and as he returned from the fray his blood fell constantly upon the ground. And wherever a drop fell, there sprang up a lily, so that apparently being a very full-blooded man he did a good deal for the amenities of the forest before he reached home.

This dragon of the story may have had some substance in fact, and possibly snakes of considerable size abounded in the forest. Allowing for much exaggeration and the inaccuracy of descriptions of phenomenon by untrained observers, yet the tale of a snake in the Harleian Miscellany, much quoted and discussed, must have had *some* substance. It is dated 1614, and entitled :

" A Discourse relating a strange and monstrous Serpent (or Dragon) lately discovered, and yet living to the great Annoyance and divers Slaughters both of Men and Cattel by his stronge and violent Poyson : In Sussex, two miles from

Horsam, in a Woode call St. Leonard's Forest, and thirtie Miles from London, this present Month of August, 1614. With the true Generation of Serpents."

The story proceeds, after some description of the forest and the nature of the places where it was bred :

" It hath been seene within halfe a mile of Horsam ; a wonder, no doubt, most terrible and noisome to the inhabitants thereabouts. There is always in his tracke or path left a glutinous and slimie matter (as by a small similitude we may perceive in a snaile's) which is very corrupt and offensive to the scent ; insomuch that they perceive the air to be putrified withall, which must needes be very dangerous. For though the corruption of it cannot strike the outward part of a man, unless heated into his blood ; yet by receiving in at any of our breathing organs (the mouth or the nose) it is by authoritie of all authors, writing in that kind, mortall and deadlie.

" This serpent (or dragon, as some call it) is reputed to be nine feete, or rather more, in length, and shaped almost in the forme of an axeltree of a cart ; a quantitie of thickness in the middest, and somewhat smaller at both endes. The former part, which he shootes as a necke, is supposed to be an elle long ; with a white ring as it were, of scales about it. The scales along his backe seem to be blackish, and so much as is discovered under his bellie, appeareth to be red ; for I speak of no nearer description than of a reasonable ocular distance. For coming too neare it, hath beene too dearely payd for, as you shall heare hereafter.

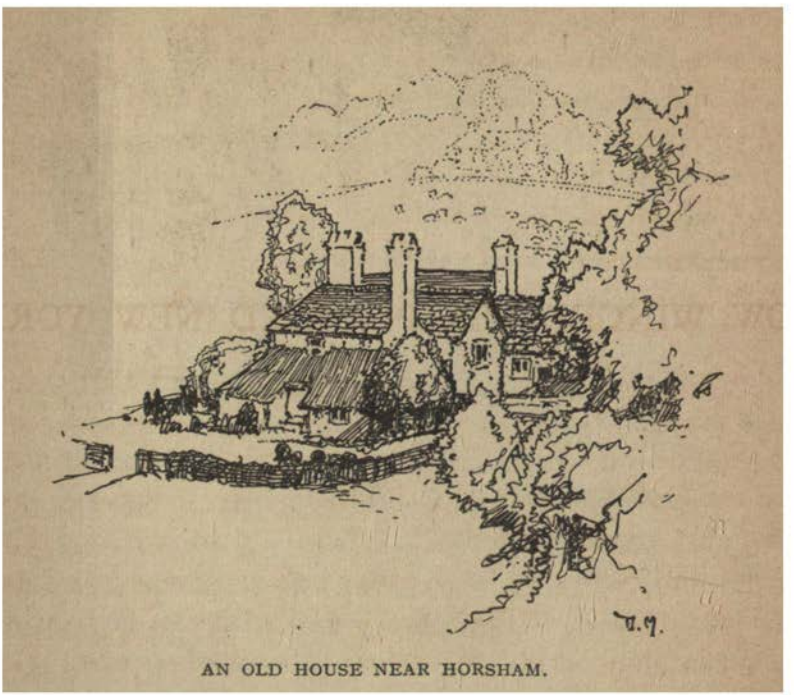
" It is likewise discovered to have large feete, but the eye

STOPHAM BRIDGE.

may be there deceived; for some suppose that serpents have no feete, but glide upon certain rolles and scales, which both defend them from the upper part of their throat unto the lower part of their bellie, and also cause them to move much the faster. For so this doth, and rids way (as we call it) as fast as a man can run. He is of countenance very proud, and at the sight or hearing of men or cattel, will raise his necke upright, and seem to listen and looke about, with great arrogancy. There are likewise on either side of him discovered, two great bunches so big as a large foote-ball, and (as some thinke) will in time grow to wings; but God, I hope, will (to defend the poor people in the neighbourhood) that he shall be destroyed before he grow so fledge."

To give an account of our pursuit of all the furnace woods and hammer ponds in Sussex would mean turning this book into a treatise on the vanished iron industry. We will therefore forbear. Our wanderings took us through Pulborough, of

which I have scribbled some idea of the quaint lich-gate, and over Stopham Bridge, perhaps the most interesting of all Sussex bridges, to Petworth. For some idea of the wonderful hammer pond near there, see further on in "The Delectable Mountains."

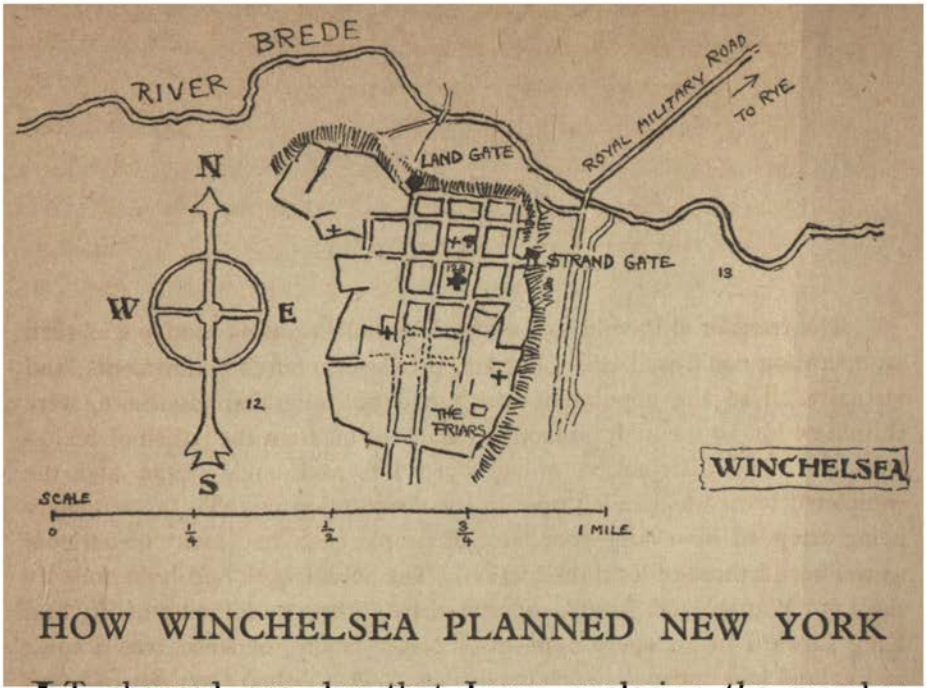


AN OLD HOUSE NEAR HORSHAM.

# VI

# HOW WINCHELSEA PLANNED NEW YORK

The transfer of the old to the new Winchelsea was as complete as such an operation could well be. Chasters, privileges, church endowments, and virtually all of the population which had not migrated elsewhere, were shifted *en bloc* to the high promontory now cut off from the parish of Icklesham. . . . The distribution of surveyed lots and lands began and the completed town was handed over to the Corporation in 1288, the ceremony being attended by a large concourse of people, including many of national as well as all those of local distinction. The actual work had been done by the Lord Warden and Jurats, supervised by Bishop de Kirkeby of Ely and King Edward in his spare moments. Never before, or since, was a town in England laid out under such conditions."—A. G. BRADLEY, *An Old Gate of England.*




# HOW WINCHELSEA PLANNED NEW YORK

IT chanced one day that I was exploring the marshes between Rye and Winchelsea, hard by Camber Castle, and in a somewhat perplexed frame of mind. Here was I, set out to write about Unknown Sussex, confronted with one of the best-known haunts in England, famous alike in picture and story and having sufficient literature about it to obliterate the Two Ancient Boroughs in books and prints were every volume and every print placed or pasted upon their venerable walls. I have, I know, braved ridicule by including Brighton as " Unknown," but this very outrageousness of doing so may be forgiven me by people blessed with a saving sense of humour.

I do not expect, however, much mercy from the people of Rye, who I am sure take themselves much more seriously.

I sat down upon a bank by a long ditch and waited for light. Perhaps something fresh in the way of visions would present itself, even in this artistic Tom Tiddler's ground, where painters and etchers have for years gathered up unlimited subject-matter with a minimum of effort. At last light came, and like all revelations came from an unexpected quarter, borne thither by the advent of an American visitor. We exchanged greetings and he sat down beside me. Within a few minutes, such is the good will of most Americans to old-world haunts, we were talking of Rye with mutual enthusiasm.

The Hill of Rye, as seen from across the level land of the marshes, always presents a dramatic sky-line, rich both in colour and broken line. Whereas I admired it from the painter's point of view, I rather fancy my new-found friend was overpowered not by its beauty so much as by its strangeness. The adjective that he used to disclose his admiration indicated this. Perhaps it would be difficult to find any one word that would be adequately descriptive. It might be called quaint or rich or romantically picturesque. A Frenchman might refer to it as "ravissante"; a German would say it was "wönderschön"; an Italian would exclaim that it was "bellesimma"; but all the languages of Europe combined together could not compress so much meaning into the American's attitude towards the Ancient Town of Rye as he did when he referred to it as "just cunning."

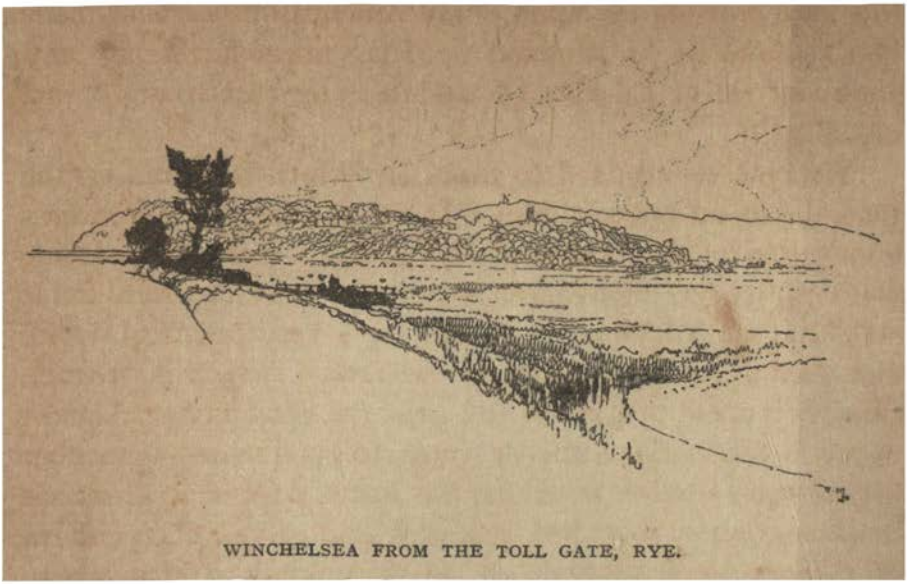
IN RYE

He said, in effect, by those two words what would have seemed quite a long speech put out in full. Coming from a land where all problems of building were more or less tackled on modern lines, and if not tackled entirely from a utilitarian point of view yet with a very splendid display of spacious art, he is appalled yet amused to find people still living like mice in a somewhat rambling cheese. Where they could have electric elevators and climbing staircases they are still content to toil up crumbling steps, and live and move and have their being amongst dolls' houses. At first sight he is just amused, as though he were studying some curious phenomenon of natural history, but soon a sort of grudging admiration emerges and he realizes that he is beholding something very extraordinary, and not only very extraordinary but very beautiful, like some quaint mosaic that no ordinary labour could produce, and which no money could buy. He feels like an artistically inclined aeroplane-constructor must feel when he looks up at the buttressed pile of Chartres Cathedral or stands before the Venus of Milo at the Louvre, that modern progress has been maintained only in certain directions. Much of it is change rather than progress. It is all very funny. When we find pots and pans of the Middle Ages we put them in museums, not because they are old, but because they are beautiful. Will future ages rave over our enamelled saucepans and beer bottles? Time will show. Possibly the verdict of a thousand years hence will be that we are living in the bright ages of transport but in the dark ages of art. It was probably some subconscious suggestion of

this kind crossing the mind of my American friend that made him exclaim as he summed up Rye, unproducible by any conscious art or calculatable architecture, that it was "just cunning."

We both determined to make for Winchelsea, and on the road discussed many things. It seems that the American's admiration for the "cunningness" of Rye was merely a passing emotion, for he endeavoured to prove to me with considerable skill that all Americans were out for a very practical world, and therefore had no room for sentiment (which is untrue), that they could not, as we did, preserve antiquity at the cost of progress (which is a libel on American good sense—remember little Trinity Church, where land is worth a fortune per square foot), and that they had invented and solved the problem of modern town planning (which is unkind to Winchelsea, but he did not know it). I chuckled, however, to myself as we walked along, for soon he would have a considerable shock.

In the course of our further conversation I told him that I lived in Borstal, a fact which seemed to interest him greatly, for he had heard of the Borstal system. He came, he said, from a place called Borston, and he seemed rather surprised that I had never heard of it. On further inquiry, however, I found that he was alluding to Boston. This let loose a further discussion which became quite brisk, and we unconsciously quickened our pace. I have noticed in long walks that if you are with some one with whom you agree you both walk slowly, but the moment a discussion starts things speed



WINCHELSEA FROM THE TOLL GATE, RYE.

up. If you disagree seriously and the argument becomes acrimonious, you will find that you are doing from four and a half to five miles per hour.

In this case the discussion was on the subject of the pronunciation of the name Boston. My American friend said that he could not imagine why English people spoke of Borston as Boston. I maintained that it was as great a mystery to English people as to why anyone should wish to call Boston "Borston."

By the time we reached the gates of Winchelsea we were simply tearing along, and I was getting quite angry, I admit, at the assumption that anyone from across the Atlantic should

come over here and lecture us on the pronunciation of our towns.

At last the pace was too furious, so we agreed to a halt, and sat down by the roadside. I told my American friend that if he would listen I would tell him why we slow English people still persist in pronouncing Boston as though it were spelt BOSTON.

Well, once upon a time, I think it was in the reign of James I., but I am a bit rusty in history, some people who were very badly treated because of their religious beliefs, decided to leave England and sail to some land where they could enjoy complete religious liberty themselves (incidentally taking good care not to grant this same liberty to other people). Some of these people had lived in Boston in Lincolnshire. Not even the most eccentric or the most humorous had ever thought of pronouncing the word Borston. When they came to their new land,

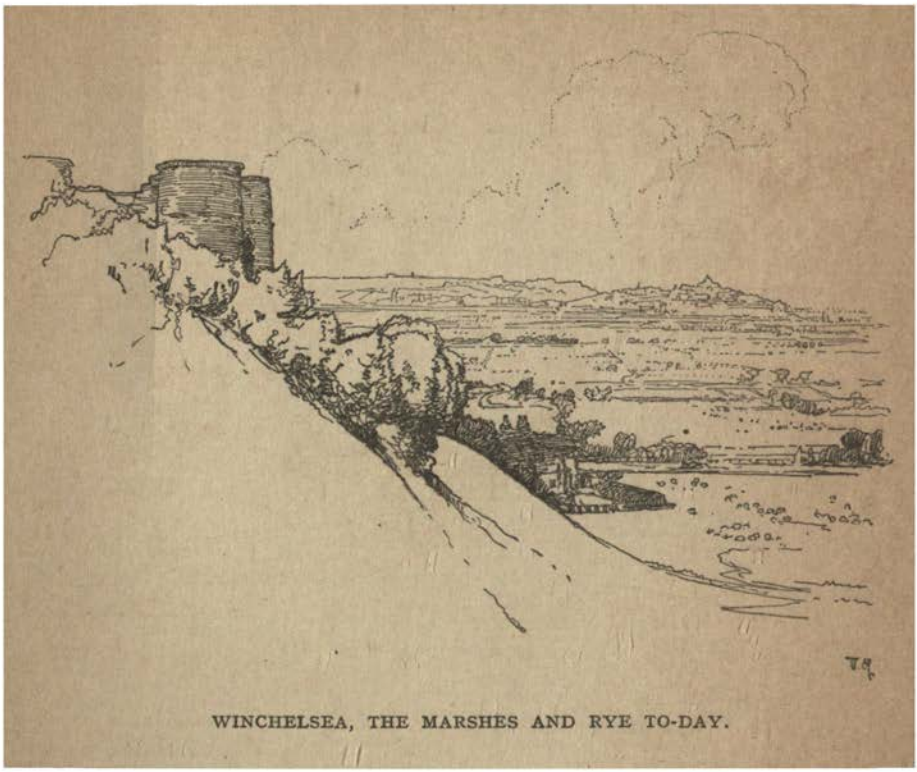
THE ENTRANCE TO WINCHELSEA.

however, and settled down they called one of their new towns after their beloved Boston. Years rolled on, and not having the advantages of Council schools, correspondence tuition by post, and other standardization of learning that we have to-day the younger generation soon forgot how to pronounce their words properly. At last this little place, Boston, became so large and so important that it was regarded by all within it and many without it as the Hub of the Universe. But, although it was the Hub of the Universe, and had surpassed in importance by ten thousand times the mother town in Lincolnshire, the pronunciation had become hopelessly lost and it was

THE EAST GATE, WINCHELSEA.

known to all and sundry in their land as the great city of Borston.

"But why they should have the damned cheek to send

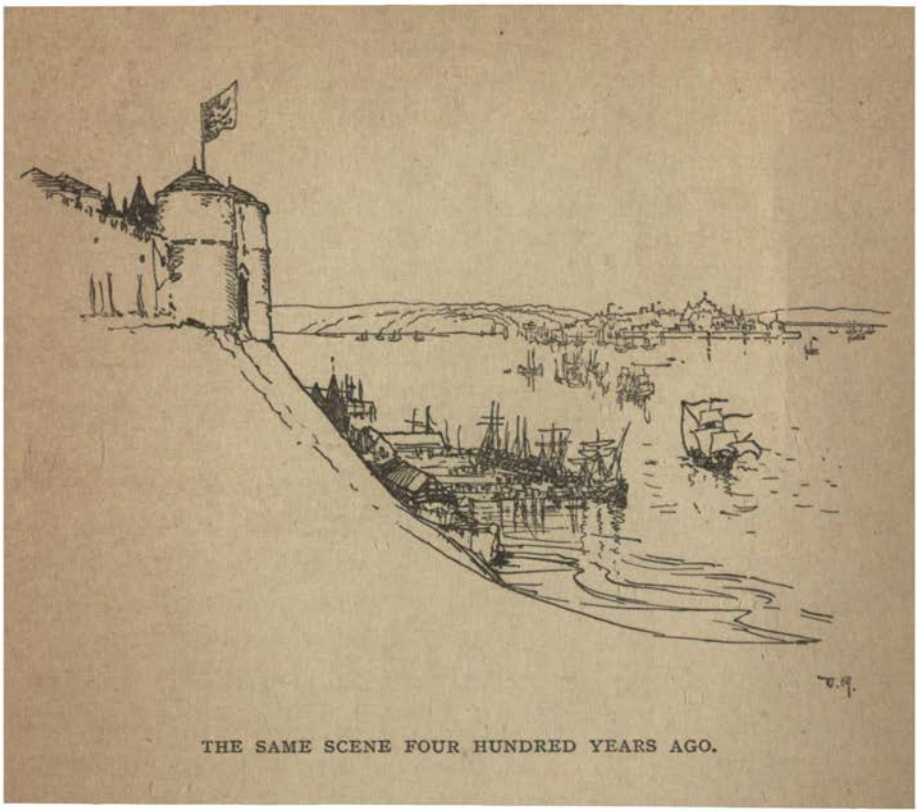


WINCHELSEA, THE MARSHES AND RYE TO-DAY.

people over to the old country to teach them how to pronounce Boston, passes my comprehension!"

After this outburst the American laughed loud and long, and we became friends for life.

It will be necessary before proceeding any further with the explanation of the share that Winchelsea had in planning New York to review briefly the history of Winchelsea from its



THE SAME SCENE FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

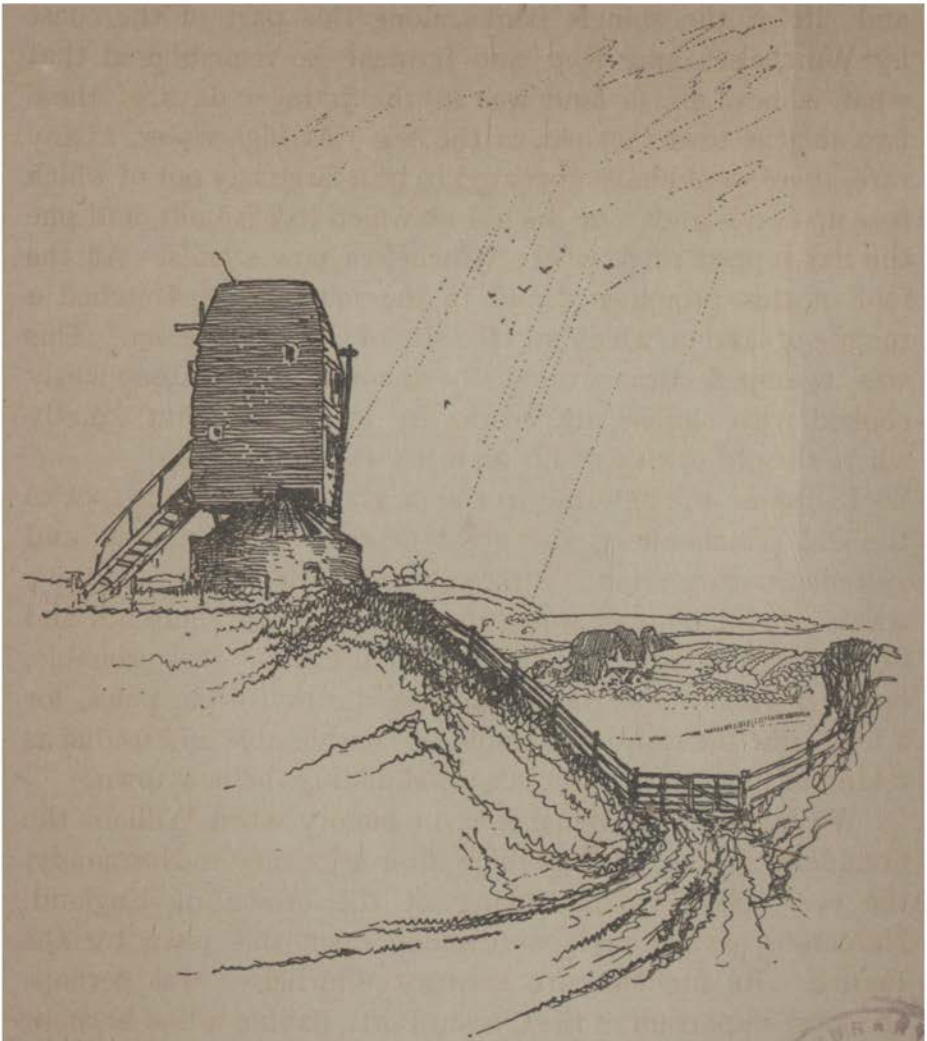
foundation, through its various vicissitudes up to the time of its desertion by the sea.

Great changes have taken place both by inundation

and silt of the shingle banks along this part of the coast by Winchelsea and Rye, and it must be remembered that what is now marsh land was in the younger days of these two ancient towns an arm of the sea. At high water, at any rate, there would have appeared to be a large bay out of which rose up two islands, one the hill on which Rye is built, and one the flat-topped ridge where Winchelsea now stands. At the foot of this prominence and to the south of it stretched a tongue of land on which was the site of Old Winchelsea. This was swamped and covered by the sea, and subsequently choked with shingle and made dry land again, but exactly where the old town stood is a matter of uncertainty.

I suppose the only bar to the location of the exact spot of the Old Winchelsea is the great expense of continuous and systematic excavation. Although a great deal of the old town was no doubt built of wood, the foundations of churches and of the larger buildings must exist somewhere. It is probable, however violent was the storm that destroyed the place, for a long time the ruins of it would be considerable and usable as a kind of quarry for materials in rebuilding the new town.

We hear of Old Winchelsea in history when William the Conqueror, in 1067, landed there after a journey to Normandy, the year following his taking of the crown of England. Numerous savage raids were made upon this town by the French. In the eleventh century Winchelsea was perhaps the most important of the Cinque Ports, having a fine harbour and busy shipbuilding yards, prosperous trade, and about four thousand inhabitants, a well-populated place in those days of



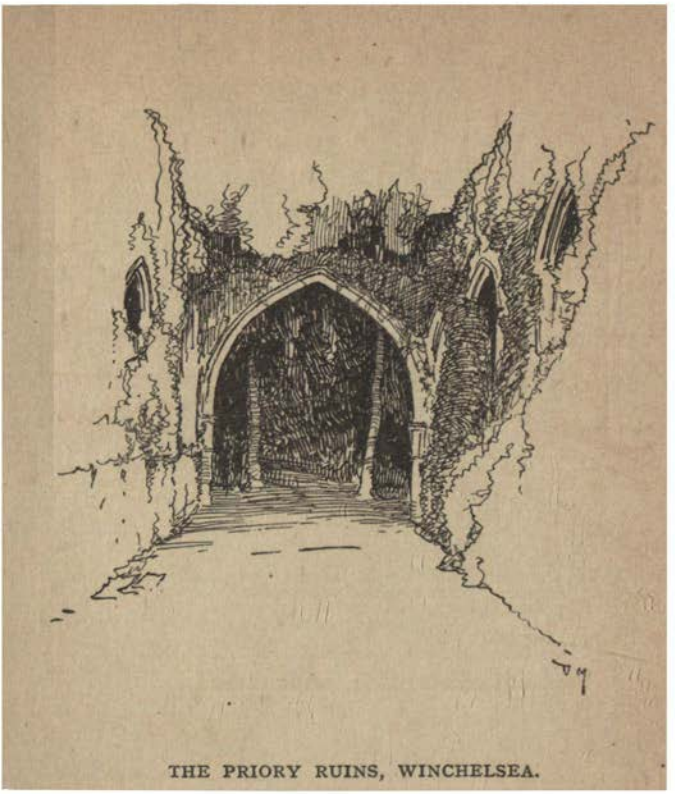
THE RUINED MILL OF WINCHELSEA.

small cities. A tremendous storm did great havoc to the town in 1250 from which she never really rallied, although her die-hard people carried on until still more disastrous days thirty-seven years later, when the New Winchelsea was begun. Of this first trial of strength with the forces of the sea, Holinshed gives us a dramatic glimpse.

"On the first day of October the moon, upon her change, appearing exceeding red and swelled, began to show tokens of the great tempest of wind that followed, which was so huge and mightie, both by land and sea, that the like had not been lightlie known, and seldome, or rather never heard of by men then alive. The sea forced contrarie to his natural course, flowed twice without ebbing, yielding such a rooring that the same was heard (not without great wonder) a farre distance from the shore. Moreover the same sea appeared in the dark of the night to burne, as it had been on fire, and the waves to strive and fight togither after a marvellous sort, so that the mariners could not devise how to save their ships where they laie at anchor, by no cunning or shift which they could devise. At Hest-burne three tall ships perished without recoverie, besides other smaller vessels. At Winchelsea, beside other hurte that was doone, in bridges, milles, breakes, and banks, there was 300 houses and some churches drowned with the high rising of the water course."

We hear of Winchelsea again in 1264, when Henry III. visited the town, and it is recorded that soon after this the town took to sea piracy as a means of keeping going in spite of nature's adversity. This liveliness, however, was soon

suppressed, for two years afterwards it is also recorded that Prince Edward punished the town in no very gentle manner, and law and order were restored. On February 4, 1287, how-



THE PRIORY RUINS, WINCHELSEA.

ever, another tempest destroyed the town beyond any chance of restoration, and it was decided to build it afresh upon the high land, where no vagaries of the sea, as they thought, could

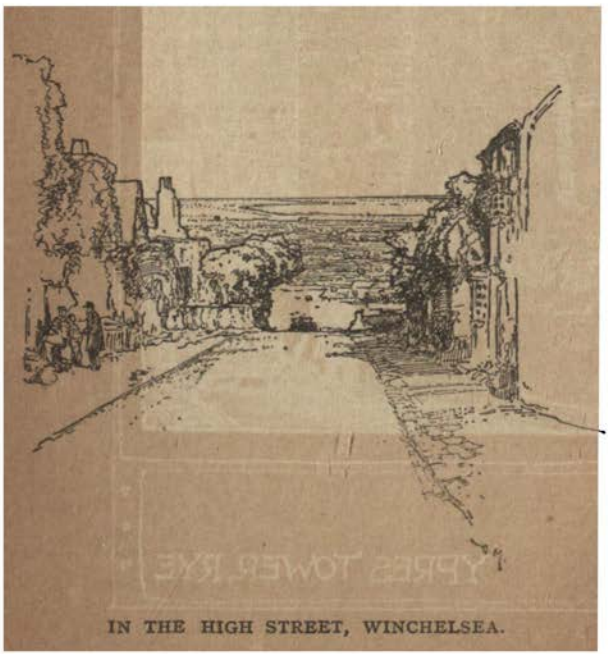
harm it again. However, the vagaries of the sea did again affect it, and it was left finally high and dry, as it stands at present without a vestige of a sea-board. Flocks of sheep

GERMAN STREET, WINCHELSEA.

now roam where ships had ridden at anchor, and Winchelsea rises pleasantly from a sea of grass.

Here is Leland's account of the beginnings of New Winchelsea, from his Itinerary (1534–1543) :

"The olde Toune of Winchelsey of six or seven yeres together felle to a very soore and manifest Ruine, be reason of old Rages of the Se, and totally in the tyme of the aforesaid six or seven yeres. In the space of these aforesayde yeres the People of Winchelsey made sute to Kyng Edward the first for Remedy and a new Plot to set them a Toun on. Whereapon the Kyng sent thither John Kirkeby Bishop of Ely and Treasorer of England, and vewid a Plot to make the new Toune of Winchelesey on, the wich was at that tyme a Ground wher Conies partely did resorte. Syr John Tregose a Knight was the chief Owner of it, and one Maurice and Bataille Abbay. The King compoundid with them: and so was there seven score and ten Acres limited to the Toune. . . .



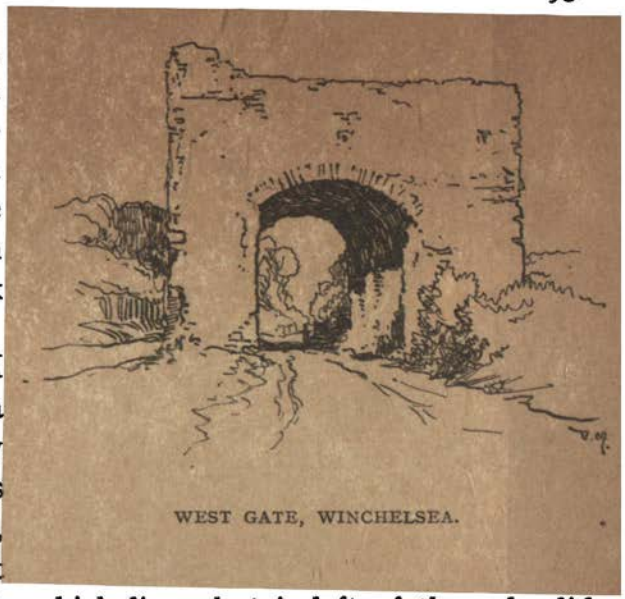
IN THE HIGH STREET, WINCHELSEA.

"Then in the tyme of the Yere aforesayde the King set to his Help in beginning and waulling New Winchelesey tooke by a litle and a litle and builded at the new Towne."

The record goes on to say that

YPRES TOWER, RYE.

twenty years expired during the creation of the New Winchelsea, and that both the French and the Spaniards did much damage to the work by raids.

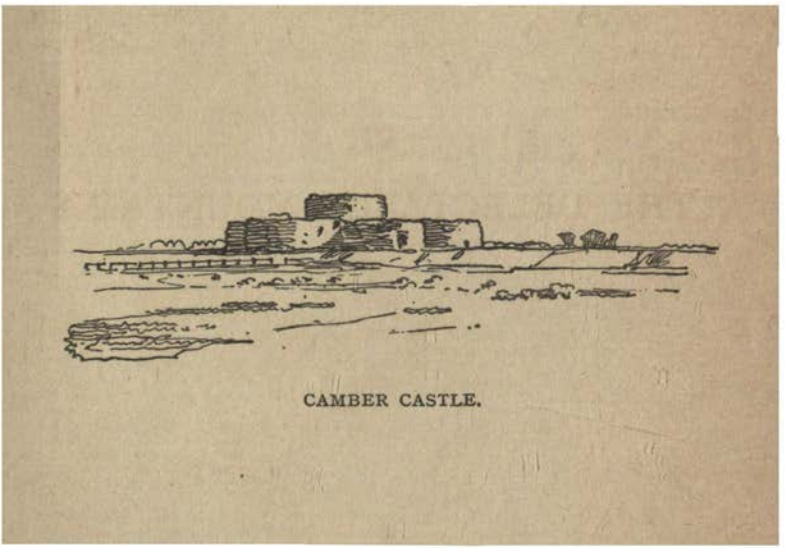


WEST GATE, WINCHELSEA.

I do not think I have often seen a man more genuinely astonished than was my American friend, when we stopped at the central square in which lies what is left of the splendid Church of St. Thomas.

"Here," I exclaimed, "is your boasted American town planning. In an age when I think there was no example of any such scheme of building in these islands some enterprising people in the year 1287 launched out into a city of squares, broad avenues, and symmetrical roads crossing each other at right angles. It was like all good town planning, designed not only for present needs but for considerable future expansion, and it is only because the sea left this New Winchelsea high and dry that it never filled out to the generous proportions anticipated. Undoubtedly the planners of Winchelsea, planned New York and other New World cities. What members of the first emigrants to America had seen the

ambitious scheme of the designers of this Sussex town, I know not, but it is evident that some unknown hero of Sussex was responsible for New York fulfilling the ambitions which had failed in Winchelsea. One man soweth and another reapeth."



CAMBER CASTLE.

# VII

# THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS

When I am living in the Midlands
  That are sodden and unkind
I light my lamp in the evening:
  My work is left behind;
And the great hills of the South Country
  Come back into my mind.

The great hills of the South Country
  They stand along the sea:
And it's there walking in the high woods
  That I could wish to be,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
  Walking along with me.

HILAIRE BELLOC.

# THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS

THERE is something about the South Downs of a nature to inspire especial enthusiasm. All people who live in them or near them fall under their spell, and a great number of people who live far away lift up the eyes of their imagination to the hills whence cometh their help. Of men of letters Kipling has moved us most concerning them, and after him, Hilaire Belloc. Shelley was bred within their influence and William Blake at Felpham dwelt for a time within sight of their swelling curves. To some this appeal of the Downs is a temperamental matter, to some it is in the nature of a first

love never quite to be effaced by other scenic delights, and to some, like myself, it is an acquired love, a friendship that has deepened and ripened until after long years, like Wordsworth's memories of the Wye, it haunts me like a passion.

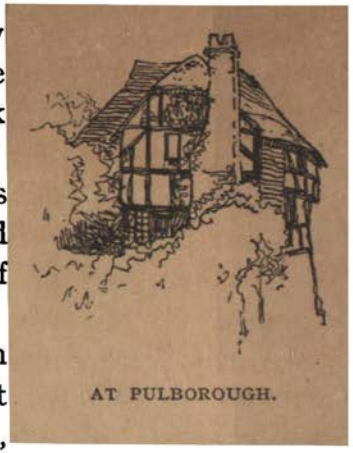
I did not, owing, I think, to a passage of praise of Gilbert White, appreciate their subtle beauty at first. A great deal depends on what one expects in approaching a type of landscape. I had seen the Alps as a boy, I had tramped the rugged Ardennes as an art student, I had spent holidays in later years among the glories of the Lake District and in the mountain fastnesses of Wild Wales. When I read this sentence, therefore, from Gilbert White, I think you will agree that I was being rather misled. The italics are mine.

"Though I have now travelled the Sussex downs upwards of thirty years, yet I still investigate that *chain of majestic mountains* with fresh admiration year by year, and I think I see new beauties in it every time I traverse it."

My first impression, therefore, of the South Downs was disappointing. I thought they were tame. Under no circumstances whatever could I regard them as a majestic chain of mountains. I was completely disillusioned. However, I began all over again, and soon learned to revel in their gentle swelling curves and wave-like turbulence, and soon I *could* see a majesty about these hills, a majesty as of the sea, disdaining mere prettiness and of compelling charm. The heights of Lewes, with a sea-fog lifting, the hanging woods by Duncton, toned in the evening by blue washes of shadow, sunshine, and darkness chequering the unmeasured spaces of the hills,

THE SOUTH DOWNS AT LEWES

these held delights which were new and full of promise, and so I have called the South Downs in this book the Delectable Mountains.


AT PULBOROUGH.

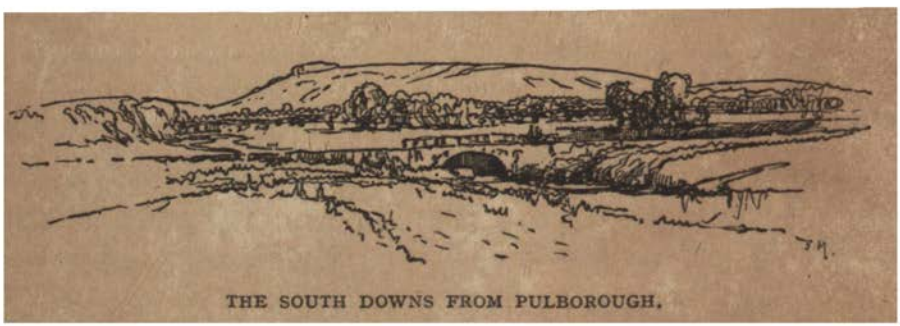
Free from any misunderstandings of anticipation, I can now enjoy and appreciate Gilbert White's eulogy of these chalk hills. He writes:

"This range, which runs from Chichester eastward as far as East Bourn, is about sixty miles in length, and is called the South Downs, properly speaking only round Lewes. As you pass along you command a noble view of the wild, or weald, on one hand, and the broad downs and the sea on the other.

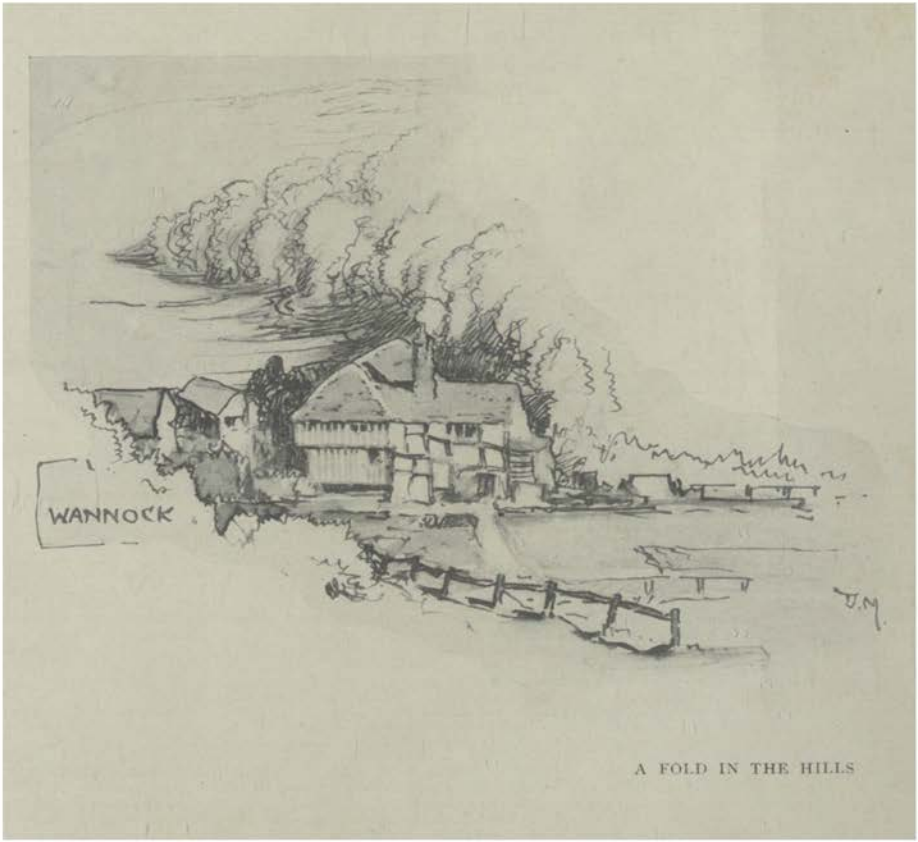
"Mr. Ray used to visit a family just at the foot of these hills, and was so ravished with the prospect from Plumpton Plain near Lewes, that he mentions those scapes in his *Wisdom of God in the Works of the Creation* with the utmost satisfaction, and thinks them equal to anything he had seen in the finest parts of Europe. For my own part I think there is somewhat peculiarly sweet and amusing in the shapely figured aspect of the chalk hills in preference to those of stone, which are rugged, broken, abrupt, and shapeless. Perhaps I may be singular in my opinion, and not so happy as to convey to you the same idea; but I never contemplate these mountains without thinking I perceive somewhat analogous to growth in their gentle swellings and smooth fungus-like

protuberances, their fluted sides, and regular hollows and slopes that carry at once the air of vegitative dilatation and expansion:—Or, was there even a time when these immense masses of calcareous matter were thrown into fermentation by some adventitious moisture, were raised and leavened into such shapes by some plastic power; and so made to swell and heave their broad backs into the sky, so much above the less animated clay of the wild below."

A good deal of controversy has occupied geologists in an attempt to account for the formation of the Weald and the South Downs. One theory, I believe now discredited, was held that the chalk hills of the North and South Downs respectively bounded an inland lake out of which rivers flowed towards the sea, thus cutting down ravines through the chalk hills until the present formation was arrived at. The only feasibility of this theory was the ease with which it could account for the numerous sudden and steep openings between the Weald and the English Channel. Another theorist held that there were rivers flowing over the chalk lands before they were pushed up to their present height—a theory which seems to



THE SOUTH DOWNS FROM PULBOROUGH.




A FOLD IN THE HILLS

FROM HARDHAM.

a non-geological observer a very reasonable one, although great ridicule was brought to bear upon it by an anonymous writer in Wilfred Ball's colour book of Sussex (published by A. and C. Black). These chalk hills were obviously once the bed of the sea, he wrote, and as rivers do not meander about the bed of the ocean the theory is absurd. Not more absurd, however, one might think, than the assumption that a geologist ever thought of anything so silly.

It is, in fact, difficult to find any hypothesis that will explain everything. The generally accepted theory is that all this region was once a bed of the sea. The composition of chalk is a sufficient proof.

Imagine, therefore, for the sake of argument, a field of level sea-bed stretching from the North Downs on the one hand to Beachy Head and the South Downs on the other. This bed is clay and gault coated to the depth of hundreds of feet with chalk deposit. Then imagine, after some immense period

of time, this great bed slowly pushed up, still more or less level, until the sea recedes and it becomes dry land. Gradually, after successive ages, the centre is pushed up so that it begins to be a vast convex dome. Naturally rain, frost, and the wear and tear of ages will crumble the upper portion of this dome first, and it will gradually become denuded till the successive layers of supporting sandstone and gault will appear. Streams running down from the higher ground of this denuded portion will keep cutting channels through the chalk, and, as the whole mass rises still more, will form ravines as the ridge rises up.

This theory of the denuded dome accounts for a good deal, but I cannot see how it accounts for the downs north-south rising so high above the central Weald, unless it is that the sandstone and gault wear away much more readily than the chalk, the gault wearing the quicker of the two.

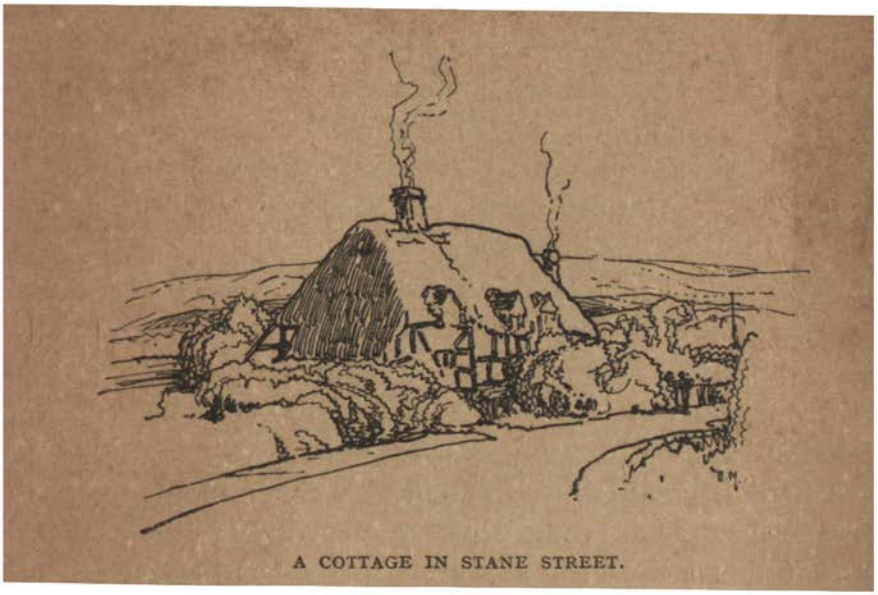
I have often sketched on the South Downs, but there was one region, the wooded steep of the western region, which I determined to explore more thoroughly. To do this I journeyed to Pulborough one day with Brown, and we set out when the afternoon light began to grow mellow, and marched in the direction of the hill country. It did not matter that our highest possible objective was some 800 feet, the feeling of freedom and adventure was as much in those tumbled lines of blue mysterious uplands as in the steep and precipitous flanks of the Matterhorn.

I had been brought into this part of Sussex by the old timbered house in Billingshurst, a sketch of which I can

SOUTHOVER

show you here, interesting to all in general, and to our American friends in particular, as the Quaker meeting-house where William Penn is known to have worshipped. Sussex is rich in such historical finds, and this is one of the best.

Another quaint type of Sussex house, this time with a thatched roof, soon came into sight at a corner of the road



A COTTAGE IN STANE STREET.

at Hardham; I have shown it here and called it "A Cottage in Stane Street," to remind you a little that we are on historical ground, but not vouching for the authenticity of the site a few feet each way for fear of exposing the extent of any topographical vagueness to Mr. Hilaire Belloc.

At Hardham are the remains of a priory, but we were not

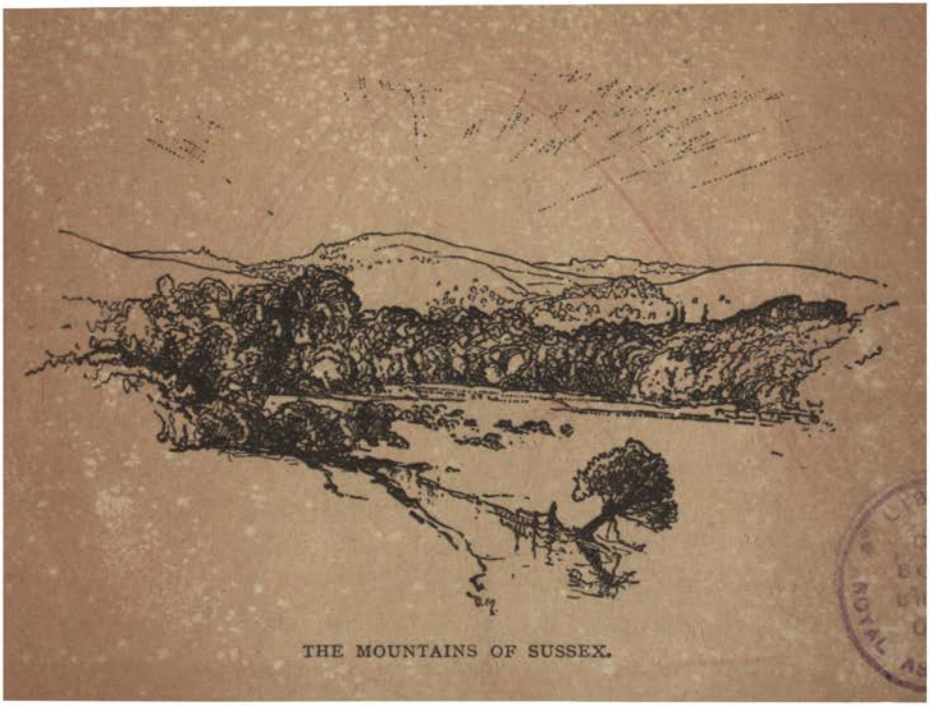
in a mood for archæology with the call of the hills strong upon us. Even the grass-grown relics of a defunct canal, which I was surprised Brown did not connect in some way with the lost iron industry, did not stop our progress. I do not know how long ago this canal went out of use, killed probably deliberately by the railway, but I seem to remember as a boy discussing the possibility of a trip to the channel from London by way of the Wey and Arun Canal. The voyage included a subterranean waterway under the Hog's Back near Guildford, and held many other adventurous delights. It seems a great pity that this and countless other water communications in England have been allowed to vanish away. I confess that I am always left singularly unconvinced by the statement so often put forward that no canal can pay against the competition of a railway. Of course it can't when it is owned by the railway. It is by nature a much cheaper form of transit and therefore too formidable a rival to railway rates to be allowed to do so.

A little beyond Coldwaltham, emerging from among some trees, we suddenly came upon a glorious glimpse of the tumbling hills. The sky was a mass of golden flame and the rounded crests of the ridge purple and blue deepening into the green mystery of the trees and fields at their feet. I have scribbled it down here, and if it serves for nothing else, at least it records the fact that there are aspects of the Sussex Downs that partake of true mountain character though the highest summit in view is of inconsiderable height.

Soon we are at the foot of Bignor Hill over which the

EASTBOURNE

Roman Stane Street stretches towards Chichester. And here, too, are eloquent reminders of the civilization which Rome had brought to Britain, the celebrated pavement of the villa discovered in 1811. I will give an account of it from a contemporary writer in a book entitled *Excursions in the*



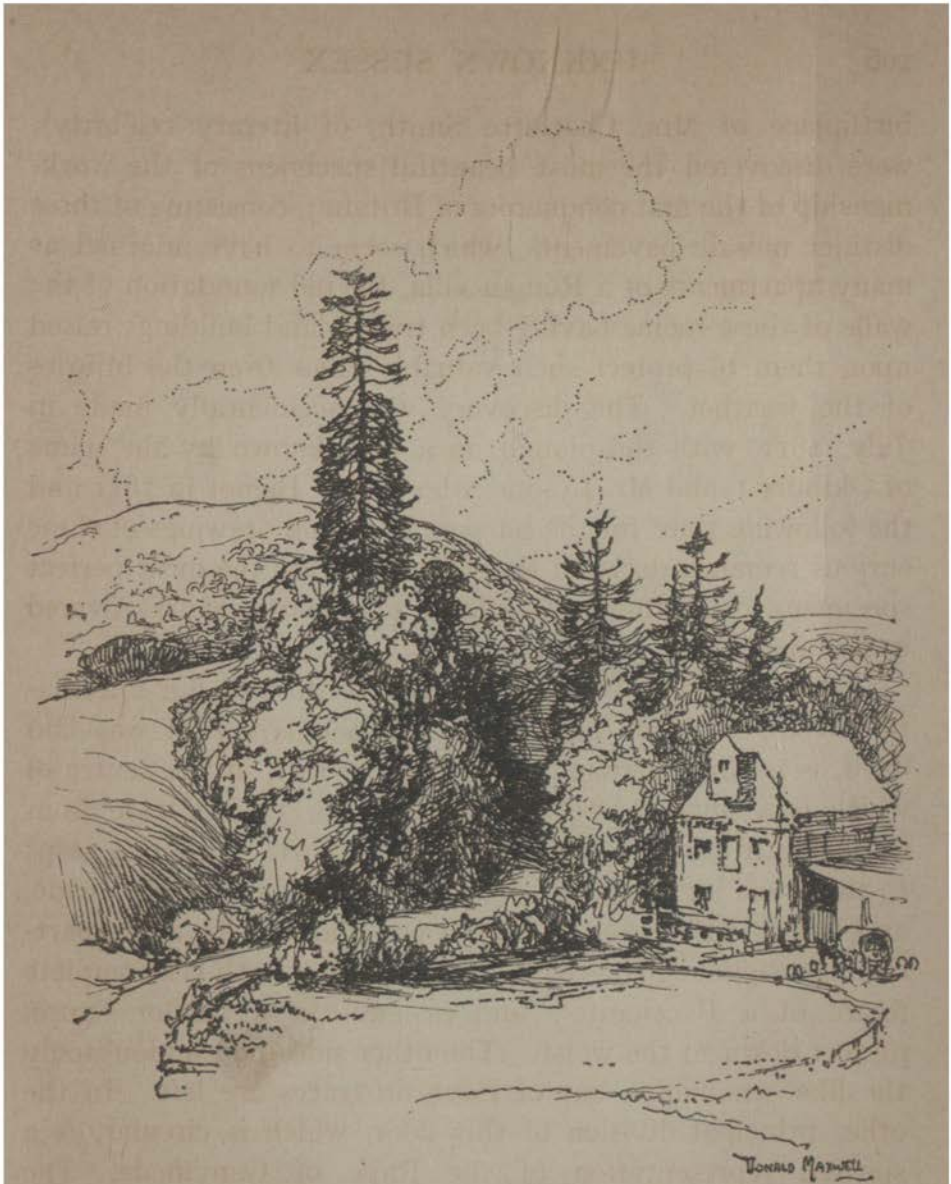
THE MOUNTAINS OF SUSSEX.

*County of Sussex, comprising brief historical and topographical delineations together with descriptions of the residences of the nobility and gentry, remains of Antiquity and other interesting objects of curiosity.*

"At Bignor, two miles south-east from Duncton (the

birthplace of Mrs. Charlotte Smith, of literary celebrity), were discovered the most beautiful specimens of the workmanship of the first conquerors of Britain ; consisting of three distinct mosaic pavements, which seem to have adorned as many apartments of a Roman villa, the old foundation of the walls of these rooms having been traced, and buildings raised upon them to protect such valuable relics from the injuries of the weather. The discovery was accidentally made in July, 1811, with the plough, in a field known by the name of Oldbury ; and Mr. Lysons, who was at Bignor in 1811 and the following year, for the purpose of taking drawings of these curious remains, declared them to constitute the most perfect specimens of the Roman tesselated pavements ever discovered in Britain."

" The largest of these pavements [continuing our information from the same authority], and the first that was laid open, is in an apartment 31 feet by 30 feet, in the centre of which is a small hexagonal vapour-bath, $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide from the outward stone coping, forming six seats, with two steps to the arena, or basement, which is only 2 feet 4 inches wide, and has a leaden pipe or flue in the middle. In a compartment contiguous to one of these sides of this bath is a complete figure of a Bacchante ; and in another, a similar figure, perfect down to the waist. The other sides had undoubtedly the like ornaments, but of these no traces are left. In the other principal division of this floor, which is circular, is a spirited representation of the Rape of Ganymede. The smallest of these pavements, about 20 feet by 10 feet, is quite




BIGNOR MILL.

entire, but contains no figures. At one end of the third, which is the westernmost, and has sustained the greatest injury, is portrayed the bust of a female, holding in her hand a leafless branch, which is considered by some antiquaries by whom these remains have been inspected as emblematic of winter. In one corner of the apartment, 43 feet by 17 feet, is a small flue, for a chimney."

"In all these pieces, but particularly in the second, the colours are remarkably vivid. The borders are composed of white, black, grey, and red; the figures are formed of tesseræ of blue and green glass, and purple, red, blue, white, and black tesseræ of a different kind; and the area of the room round each is paved with Roman brick. Besides these apartments, the foundations of other walls and passages, paved with brick, have been laid open. In cleaning them, was found part of the shaft of a column, which, from the regularity of the section and the hole in the centre, seems to have been one of several pieces of which it was composed. Roman bricks of various sizes, some of the flue kind, with a considerable quantity of rubble stone, fragments of the fine red Samian vessels, and other Roman pottery, with decorated plaster of the walls of the apartments, have also been turned up."

We slept the night in a cottage at Sutton End just beyond Bignor, for it was not much use going any further as it was too dark to see anything, but we made great plans for getting up with the very first lark.

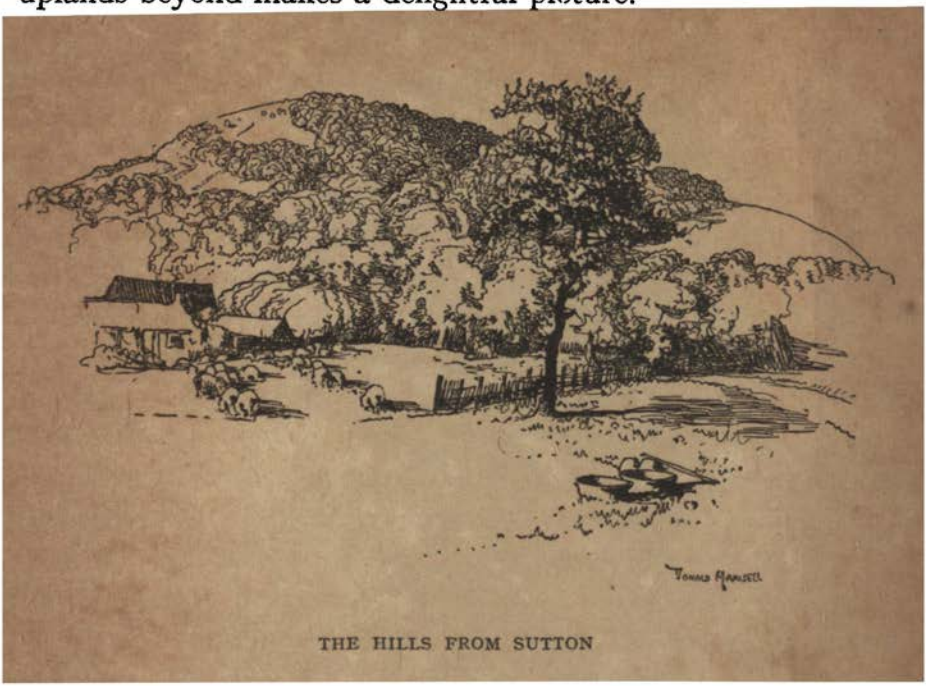
It ended in the usual way. I got up—not with the very

first lark, but in time to do the sketch on page 107 before the sun was very high—and joined Brown at breakfast. Brown's views change very quickly. In the evening getting up early is inevitable and practical. In the morning it is quixotic and idiotic. However, Brown praised my sketch so highly that I was somewhat compensated for having to go out alone. I think this eulogy was really in the nature of a veiled apology for having been so lazy. You will notice, since we are still considering this sketch, that I am not quite mad, as some of my friends think, in seeing some sort of resemblance between this view and some scenes in the Black Forest. The mill and the pine trees are, I suppose, responsible for the likeness. By the way, this reminds me that Cæsar records that the fir (and I suppose he means all trees of that tribe) are not indigenous to England. Can anybody enlighten me as to the truth of this? Are all the pines and firs in the heathy and sandy uplands of Sussex the result of planting from imported seedlings?

Going north from Sutton, there are delightful glimpses of wooded heights, and then the road takes to the woods after crossing a water-splash. On page 115 is a sketch-map which shows our path from Sutton End. The woods above Duncton are very steep and thick, and at their feet begins a small stream, a tributary of the Rother, flowing more or less north-east and making a chain of ponds of increasing size. The first road to the left takes you between the two large ones, and the second turning brings you out at the foot of the finest sheet of water in this miniature Lake District of Sussex. I have

BEACHY HEAD

marked with a cross the spot from which I made the sketch on page 113. This is, from the scenic point of view, the finest of all the hammer ponds of Sussex. The thick trees clustering down to the seed-covered shores and the glimpse of wooded uplands beyond makes a delightful picture.



THE HILLS FROM SUTTON

There is a mill just below this piece of water and Brown soon ascertained that it was on the site of ironworks and evidently the successor of one that drove the hammers of a forge. The name Hammer Moors still denotes the track of irregular pasture at the back of a house below the mill. There are pieces of ironstone about also and there is no doubt

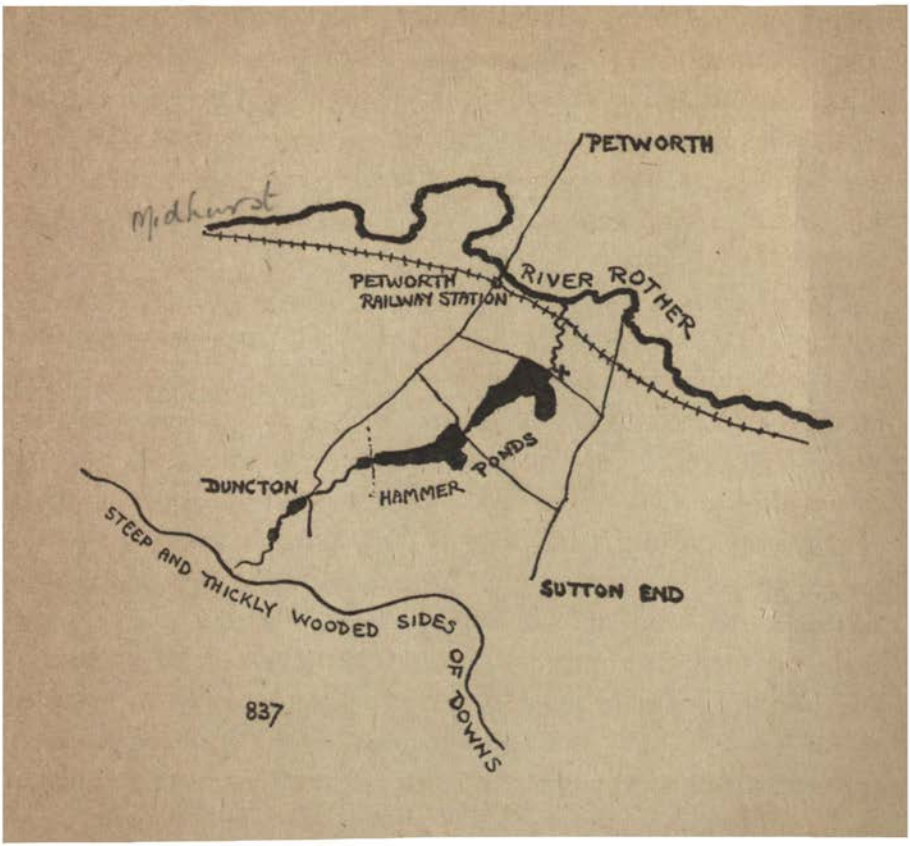
about the origin of these ponds. The road that passes the lower end of the first pond is evidently constructed on the old dam of the furnace pond.

Soon we come to a deer fence and then a turn in the road, a hill, and we can see Petworth, where stands the square-faced Petworth House where Turner used to sketch as the guest of Lord Egremont. About twenty years before this "it was an entire forest-scene, overspread with bushes, furze, some timber and rubbish, useless except for the purpose of annually rearing a few miserable ragged cattle. The timber was sold, the underwood grubbed up, and burned into charcoal on the spot. Every part has subsequently been drained in the most effectual manner and the whole inclosed and divided into fields. It is also thoroughly stocked with Sussex, Devon, and Herefordshire cattle, and flocks of the South Down, Spanish, Leicester, and Romney breeds of sheep; besides which, his lordship imported the Calmuck and Astracan kinds of the latter animal, whose chief peculiarity is, that instead of a tail, they have a large projection of fat, or rather marrow, of exquisite delicacy; and also the shawl-goat of Tibet from the fleece of which the most valuable manufactures of the East Indies are produced."

To continue to quote from an anonymous writer of just a hundred years ago, "In front of the house is a very noble piece of water, the construction of which, from the springs of the adjacent hills, did not cost less than £30,000. The approach is rather too abrupt; the general effect of so extensive a range of building would have been much heightened had it

A HAMMER POND NEAR PETWORTH.

been more gradual. The appearance of the front is somewhat monotonous, forming as it does an unbroken mass of free-stone, with twenty-one windows in each story; there are statues, it




is true, intended probably to diversify this sameness, ranged along the top. The principal apartments would constitute a noble museum of antiques and paintings; the former

consisting of very fine originals in statuary and sculpture, and the latter being by the most eminent masters. It is related by a contemporary writer that ' many of the antiques when purchased by the late Earl, were complete invalids, some wanting heads, others hands, feet, noses or other parts. These mutilations his lordship supplied by the application of new members, very ill adapted in point of execution, to the Grecian or Roman trunks; whence it is observed, that this stately fabric excites the idea of an hospital for wounded and disabled statues.' "

This was over a century ago. The glory of Petworth now is in its Turner sketches, many of them revealing the secrets that the great painter found hidden in these delectable mountains of Sussex. It is well worth a pilgrimage to see these. The bulk, however, of Turner's work in Sussex is in the National Collection, and some of the interior sketches of Petworth House, although they are so inexplicable to many people on account of their slightness, are among the master's most wonderful experiments. Many of them are done on blue-grey paper with so little attempt at realization that even a painter may have to look at them for some time to find out what is their subject-matter. There are glimpses of rooms, groups of people, splashes of sunlight, and a hundred and one things which before Turner were not dreamed of as the subjects of pictures at all. We are familiar enough now with subject-matter of the most accidental kind being used pictorially, but forget who opened out new fields for painters.

THE FRYARS, WEST CHILTINGTON

Of the Sussex water-colours of Turner certain examples will come into our memories at once; the wonderful distant view of Arundel Castle from the Downs, with some deer in

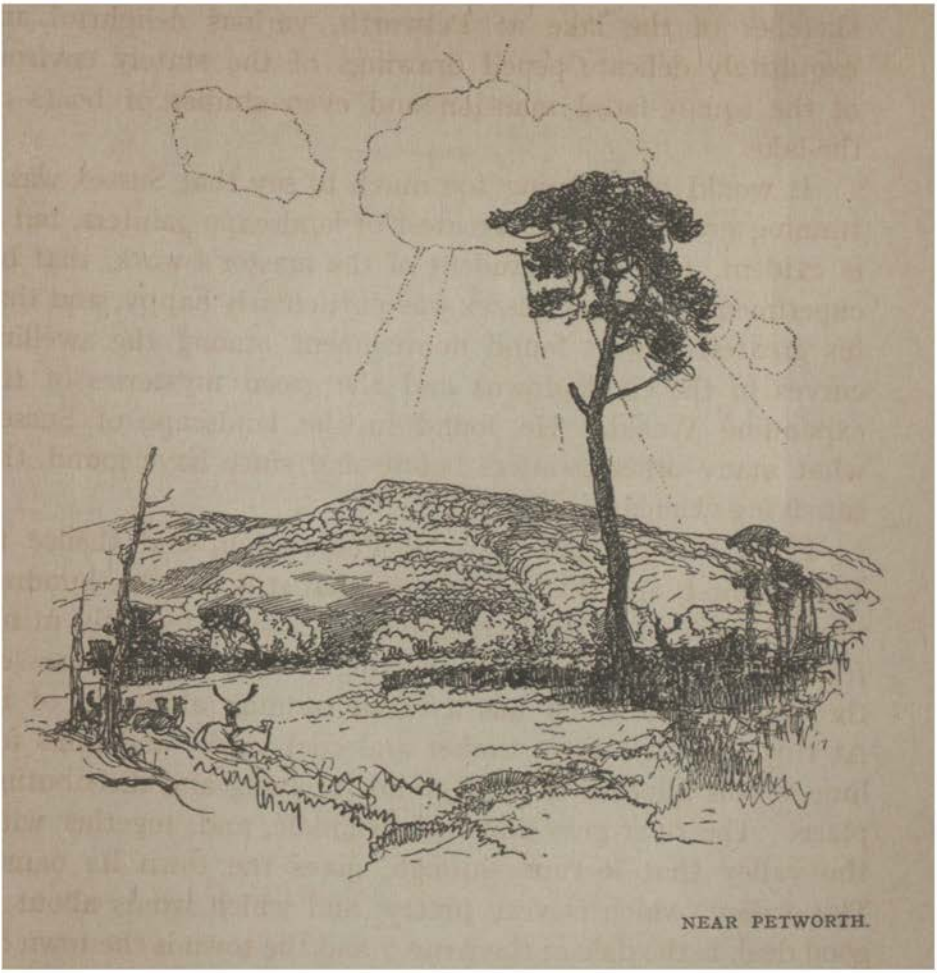
A COTTAGE AT BIGNOR.

the foreground, the Vale of Heathfield, the Liber Studiorum plate of the gate of Winchelsea, the unfinished oil paintings of Chichester Canal, and of a sunset in Petworth Park showing a herd of deer.

I remember, too, a great many experimental body-colour sketches of the lake at Petworth, various delightful and exquisitely delicate pencil drawings of the stately environs of the square-faced mansion and even studies of boats on the lake.

It would be claiming too much to say that Sussex was a training ground for the greatest of landscape painters, but it is evident, to a close student of the master's work, that his experimental work in Sussex was particularly happy, and that his greatest powers found nourishment among the swelling curves of the chalk downs and the green mysteries of the expanding Weald. He found in the landscape of Sussex what many other painters before and since have found, the satisfying element of infinity.

From here we got back to Pulborough, and thence to Billingshurst, and this reminds me that it is just one hundred years almost to a day that Cobbett wrote so feelingly in his *Rural Rides:* "Soon after quitting Billingshurst I crossed the river Arun which has a canal running alongside of it. At this there are large timber and coal yards, and kilns for lime. This appears to be a grand receiving and distributing place. The river goes down to Arundale, and, together with the valley that it runs through, gives the town its name. This valley, which is very pretty, and which winds about a good deal, is the dale of the Arun ; and the town is the town of Arun-dale. To-day, near a place called Westborough Green, I saw a woman bleaching her home-spun and home-woven linen. I have not seen such a thing before, since I left Long



NEAR PETWORTH.

Island. There, and, indeed, all over the American States north of Maryland, and especially in the New England States, almost the whole of both linen and woollen, used in the country, and a large part of that used in towns, is made in the farm-houses. There are thousands and thousands of families who never use either, except of their own making. All but the weaving is done by the family. There is a loom in the house, and the weaver goes from house to house. I once saw about three thousand farmers, or rather country people, at a horse race in Long Island, and my opinion was, that there were not five hundred who were not dressed in home-spun coats. As to linen, no farmer's family thinks of buying linen. The lords of the loom have taken from the land, in England, this part of its due; and hence one cause of the poverty, misery, and pauperism that are becoming so frightful throughout the country. A national debt, and all the taxation and gambling belonging to it, have a natural tendency to draw wealth into great masses. These masses produce a power of *congregating* manufactures, and of making the many work at them for the *gain of few*. The taxing Government finds great convenience in these congregations. It can lay its hand easily upon a part of the produce; as ours does with so much effect. But the land suffers greatly from this, and the country must finally feel the effects of it. The women and children, who ought to provide a great part of the raiment, have nothing to do. The fields *must* have men and boys; but where there are men and boys there will be *women* and *girls;* and as the lords of the loom have now a set of real slaves, by the means of whom they

take away a great part of the employment of the country-women and girls, these must be kept by poor rates in whatever degree they lose employment through the lords of the loom. One would think that nothing can be much plainer than this; and yet you hear the *jolterheads* congratulating one another upon the increase of Manchester, and such places. My straw affair will certainly restore to the land some of the employment of its women and girls. It will be impossible for any of the 'rich ruffians,' any of the horse-power or steam-power or air-power ruffians, any of the greedy, grinding ruffians, to draw together bands of men, women, and children, and to make them slaves, in the working of straw. The raw material comes of itself, and the hand, and the hand alone, can convert it to use. I thought well of this before I took one single step in the way of supplanting the Leghorn bonnets. If I had not been certain that no rich ruffian, no white-slave holder, could ever arise out of it, assuredly one line upon the subject never would have been written by me."

These violent sentiments are read with strange interest to-day. A good deal of Cobbett proved right. I tremble to think, however, what he would have written about the national debt of to-day. He would probably have burst before he got through the first paragraph.

Before quitting this study of the delectable mountains I returned from roaming by way of West Chiltington, where there is an old windmill and an old house, the Fryars, of great interest. It has been restored and enlarged, but done so in such a way that nothing but added interest is the result.

THE BLUE IDOL,
*A Quaker Meeting House, near Billingshurst, in which William Penn worshipped.*

I just missed meeting the whole of the Sussex Archæological Society who had been entertained by the owner, Major Hartley Clark. I am sorry for this, because I returned to Billingshurst by way of the Blue Idol, the Quaker meeting-house I sketched (facing page 122), and they might have been able to throw some light on the curious name of this historic building.

I tried all sorts of local people, including one Quaker lady who lived near, but no one had any reasonable or feasible explanation. One man said that it was so called because at this place some blue stone was dug up. Another said that as it had always been coloured blue, and was empty for a very long time, it may have been known as the blue *idle* house, and then the spelling got altered and the origin of the name forgotten.

The blue colouring was undoubtedly old—a colouring obtained by burning lime in a certain way. Another explanation is that there was once an inn of that name.

However, I have an explanation which is at least ingenious, and as good as any other. The word "Quaker" was a name of ridicule, and remembering that the Quakers were the very last people to have idols, this may have been a name of ridicule too. Possibly there were tactless Quakers who spoke of many things in the church as savouring of idolatory. The orthodox would retaliate by dubbing the Friends' well-cared-for little meeting-house as their blue idol, and the name stuck.

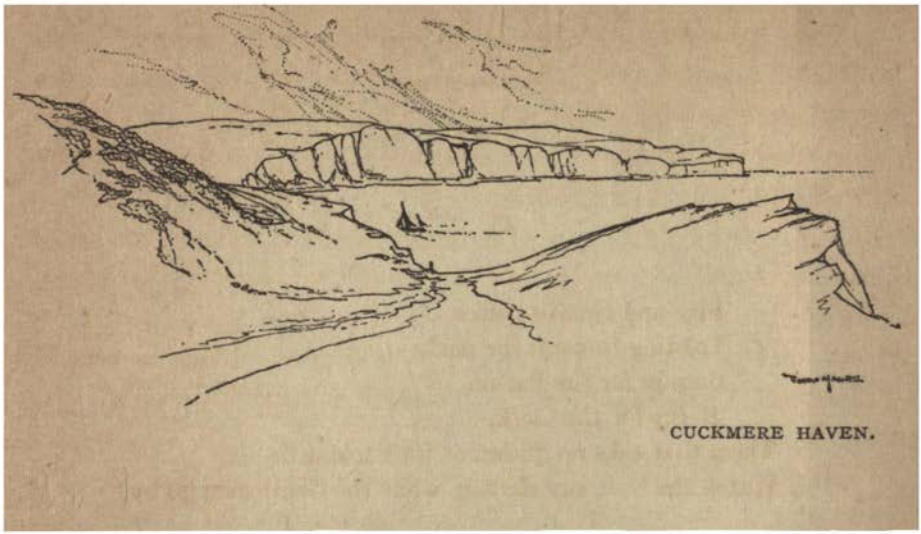
Another very interesting feature of the Blue Idol is the

diminutive burial ground, a part of which you can see in the sketch. The whole place had become rather overgrown, but now some of the local Quakers have done it up themselves, and made a very good job of it. Many Americans come here to see it.

# VIII
# SMUGGLING SUSSEX

Five and twenty ponies
Trotting through the dark—
Brandy for the Parson,
'Baccy for the Clerk.
Them that asks no questions isn't told a lie—
Watch the wall, my darling, while the Gentlemen go by!

KIPLING.



CUCKMERE HAVEN.

## SMUGGLING SUSSEX

"I LIKE a smuggler," writes Charles Lamb. "He is the only honest thief." There is certainly a picturesqueness about "free trade," as evading the Customs was once called, that makes it different in the average mind from mere theft and swindling.

Sussex, of all parts of our coast, was perhaps the best fitted for smuggling, because the sea-coast was separated from inland towns by the wilds of the Weald and there was always a "hinterland" of very sparsely inhabited country, with farms and old manor houses not much under observation.

Roads were bad or almost non-existent, and it was consequently exceedingly difficult country for revenue officers to patrol.

It seems that almost every one was in league, either actively or passively, with the cargo-runners, and land-smugglers took up the story where the seamen left off.

As an example of the "respectability" of the smugglers' friends, Alexander Pope, in 1717, writes to John Caryll, a Sussex squire: "I beg you to do me a familiar or rather domestic piece of service. It is, when a hogshead of good French wine falls into your hands—whether out of the skies, or whatever element that pays no customs—that you would favour me with about twelve dozen of it at the price you give."

Many a haunted house upon the coast owed its ghost to smugglers. A reputation so eerie that no good Christian soul would venture within miles was a great asset upon a dark night. The ghostly drummer of Hurstmonceux Castle, a figure of incredible height, whose drumming could be heard far out at sea, was probably a well-rehearsed stage effect of the Pevensey "free traders." What a pity the kinematograph had not been available to these adventurers. They could have added very effectively to their repertoire.

The churchyards of Sussex ports bear witness to the constant warfare between the smugglers on the one hand, with whom nearly every one seemed to be in league, and the revenue officers on the other, who were a mere handful, but very brave men set to do an almost impossible task. In the

CUCKMERE HAVEN

churchyard of All Saints, Hastings, is the epitaph of a smuggler, shot at sea by a revenue officer.

He was probably a great villain and richly deserved his lot, but you will note that popular opinion seems to take his side, judging from the verse on his grave, as surely as the child took the side of the poor lion who had not got an early Christian :

> "May it be known, tho' I am clay,
> A base man took my life away;
> But freely him I do forgive
> And hope in heaven we shall live."

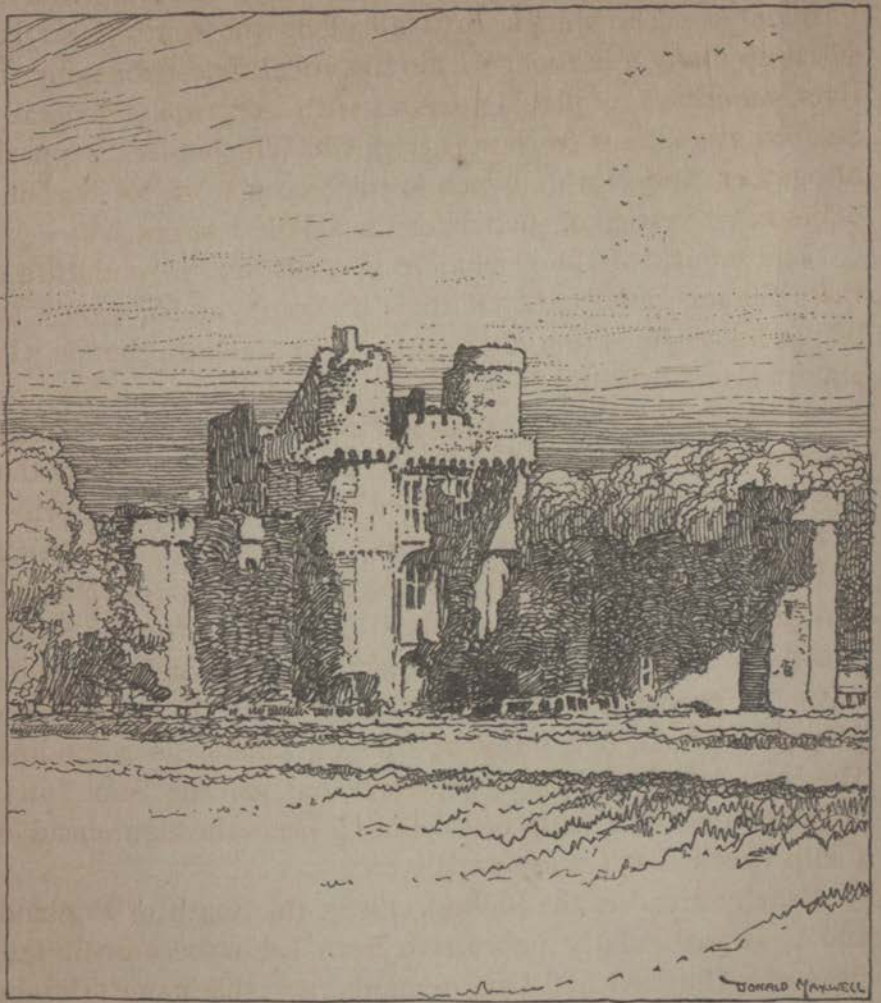
I made another exploration on the south coast only a few days ago, and found Eastbourne a wonderful centre for rambles with a sketch-book; the low coast, with its long range of martello towers, the South Downs, with its old-world villages and quaint places tucked away in the folds of the hills, the magnificent cliff scenery of Beachy Head, the bluff heights of the Seven Sisters, a coast full of the memories of smuggling days. I have sketched here, first a view of the steep cliffs above the lighthouse, and then the mouth of the little river Cuckmere, literally pushing its way through the banks of piled shingle at a spot between the cliffs and known as Cuckmere Haven. In order to do this I crossed the stream in the coastguards' boat, for it is from the other side that the most striking view of this place can be obtained. In the distance is the western flank of Beachy Head. Anything more ironical than the word "Haven" for such an entrance it would be impossible to find, though the name is an old one

and probably tells of a time when the shingle banks were not so formidable. The shingle drift all along the south coast has silted up many a harbour within historical times, changing the river mouths and playing havoc with geography generally. Seaford gives place to New Haven, Old Winchelsea disappears altogether, and Hythe (which is the Saxon word for harbour) offers not a vestige of shelter for the smallest of craft.

The mouth of the Cuckmere is a history in miniature of these Sussex and Kentish shingle harbours, and not only the banks, but the position of the little river's mouth, change with almost every tide and in heavy weather quite noticeably.

There is here a skeleton building half-buried in shingle still bravely bearing a battered notice to the effect that luncheons and teas can be obtained therein at moderate prices. A few hundred yards to the west of the gap is a curious feature, a narrow passage cut into the cliff, steep, but possible of ascent by means of a chain fixed to a post at the top. This is supposed to be a relic of smuggling days and smuggling ways. Generally, however, the "free traders" used Alfriston, about five miles up the Cuckmere, as a landing. This wonderful old place preserves outside the Star Inn a huge wooden lion, supposed to have been the figurehead of a ship wrecked at Cuckmere Haven.

Beachy Head is the highest cliff in the South of England, and it is particularly impressive from below because it falls sheer to the beach. This reminds me the name Beachy has nothing to do with beach. It is a corruption of Beau Chef.




HURSTMONCEUX.

The old lighthouse, Belle Tout, was built in 1831. It is now disused. The great height of the light, although of advantage in fine weather, was often a snare to navigators in times of rain and low clouds, for it became obscured. In 1902 the new lighthouse was built below the headland, standing in the sea. There is also an interesting relic of the days before either lighthouse existed, Parson Darby's Hole, a cave reached by means of steps. There is some uncertainty as to its purpose. It is variously suggested that the maker of it meant to provide a refuge for shipwrecked sailors, a refuge from his wife's tongue, a primitive lighthouse to guide ships, and last, but not least, a look-out to guide smugglers and keep them informed when the coast was clear.

At one time smuggling might be said to have been the industry of the coast. Everybody seemed to take part in it—even the church in its unofficial capacity. A story is told of a stranger to these parts being much shocked at the open and shameless landing of smuggled goods on the beach. He thought he ought to tell some one about it who represented authority. A long search for the parson, the only representative of law and order he could think of, led him to the beach, and a figure holding a lamp to guide the landing boat was pointed out to him. It was the parson himself aiding and abetting the " free traders " !

On another occasion the smugglers at a certain village, in the course of one of their adventures, being hard pressed by the revenue officers, ran their cargo into the church, half filling it with dutiable goods of various sorts. The parson,

being aware of what had happened, very sportingly went to bed, and an announcement was thereafter put on the church door intimating to all that owing *to this sudden illness there would be no services on Sunday !*

I have turned up an account by the artist, J. T. Hissey, of an interesting discovery made by Birling Gap (1887), giving a certain substance to the local smuggling stories of this chalk coast. He had come across an old farmhouse, and after exploring its many old-world delights he met a man with a basket. " 'See,' " he exclaimed, " 'what we've found a-digging in yon chalkpit.'

" For a moment our hearts beat high ; perchance his basket was laden with rare Celtic relics, for such treasures are occasionally found in these downs, even in this day. But no ; removing a cloth that covered them, there were revealed to us two battered skulls, some bones and other grim remains of poor humanity. . . . 'We found the skeletons,' he went on, 'about three feet from the top o' the ground. There were only just these bones and rusty nails ; the rest has gone to dust long ago. They must have been buried a many years, and in a hurry, or else they would have been put deeper down.'

" Here was a promising mystery. How came those skeletons there ? Had some undiscovered crime in past times been committed close to this lonely farm ? We asked the man's opinion. 'Smugglers,' was his laconic reply. Then, after a thoughtful pause, he continued : 'Them's the remains of smugglers, killed whilst fighting their way with a cargy

they'd run in at the gap' (Birling Gap understood). 'Yes, them's the remains of smugglers; I've no doubt about it.'

"We had no difficulty in finding the chalkpit; it was only a very short distance away from the house, by the side of the road leading direct to the sea, which would seem to confirm the likelihood of the theory that a severe struggle had taken place near there between a body of preventive men and a gang of smugglers, and that those who had fallen in the fight had been hastily buried on the spot. We saw the impression in the chalk—barely two feet underground to the best of our judgment, clearly proving the hurried nature of the interment."

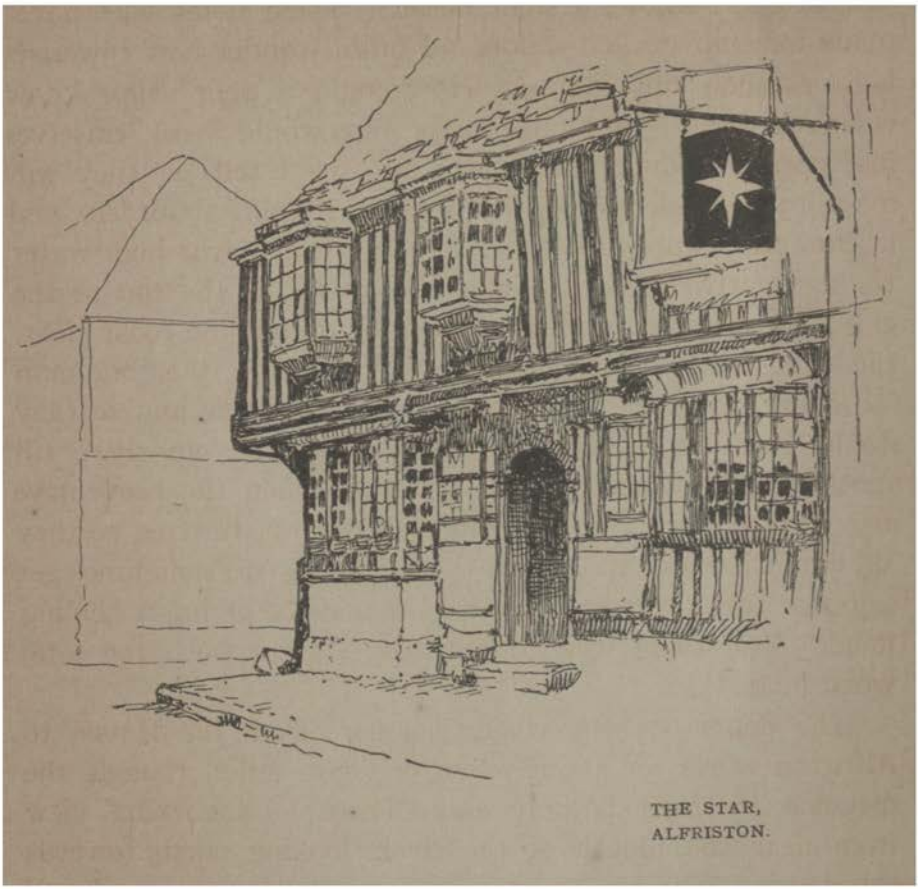
The same artist who gives us this story, again in his book, *A Holiday on the Road*, throws some light on the controversial subject of Parson Darby's Hole, previously mentioned. The artist is in conversation with a shepherd on the downs.

"'Are times any better than they used to be?'

"'No, sir, I don't think they are, leastway for us poor folk. Not that I'm much better or worse off than I wur when young; but my fayther, who wur a shepherd afore me, he wur a lot better to do. You see, in his time a shepherd could now and again earn a honest penny by helping the smugglers a bit at nights. I've heard my old fayther tell a lot about 'em. Of course he wur on the downs all day, and he used to keep an eye upon the preventive men, and now and again give a helping hand at night; it paid better nor shepherding. Perhaps you may have heard about some holes cut in the cliff under the lighthouse yonder; people do say as how they wur

made by some old parson (Parson Darby's Holes they calls 'em) so that shipwrecked sailors might climb up to 'em for safety, but I knows a sight better. Them holes wur never made for shipwrecked sailors. I often wonder how towerists believes such silly stories. How could a poor sailor know where they wur ? and 'taint likely ships would wreck 'emselves just opposite where they was. No, sir, I tell 'ee they wur made by smugglers. My faythe r used to tell I about 'em, and as how they wur worked. You see, when it wur high water the preventive men used to come up on to the top of the cliff ; so at nights when the tide wur up and the coast clear, the smugglers used to run their cargy in below, then one man 'ud climb up to the holes, and let down a rope, and so they would haul the things up. Then they left 'em there till another night when the tide was out, when the preventive men watched on the beach, and then the top wur free, so they 'ud haul the casks up. Then the shepherds 'ud sometimes get a job or two a-watching around, or may be giving a helping hand. Yes, them wur good times ; I wur born too late, worst luck.' "

The course of the river Cuckmere from the Haven to Alfriston winds for about seven or eight miles, though the distance by road is only six. There is a striking view from near the mouth of the river, looking north towards the downs. The bridge is a temporary structure, a relic of war-time, when a machine-gun school was in full activity on this eastern bank of the stream. This wooden bridge connected the range with the camp on the western downs.



THE STAR,
ALFRISTON.

I tramped from this point to Alfriston in the failing light and by the time I arrived there it was dark. To say, however, that Alfriston was dark, does not give any adequate idea of the state of things. I think I have never known such Stygian blackness. It is said of the darkness of Egypt that it could be felt. I do not know how to describe the darkness of Alfriston. It certainly could be felt in innumerable bumps and bruises as I fell over things and ran into things and groped among things. There was no light or lamp of any kind except a kindly glow which emanated from a butcher's shop. When this ceased, however, owing to the shop closing, darkness reigned supreme, and it was only the advent of a motor bus that showed up the village street for a few seconds disclosing the fact that there were other human beings groping about like myself.

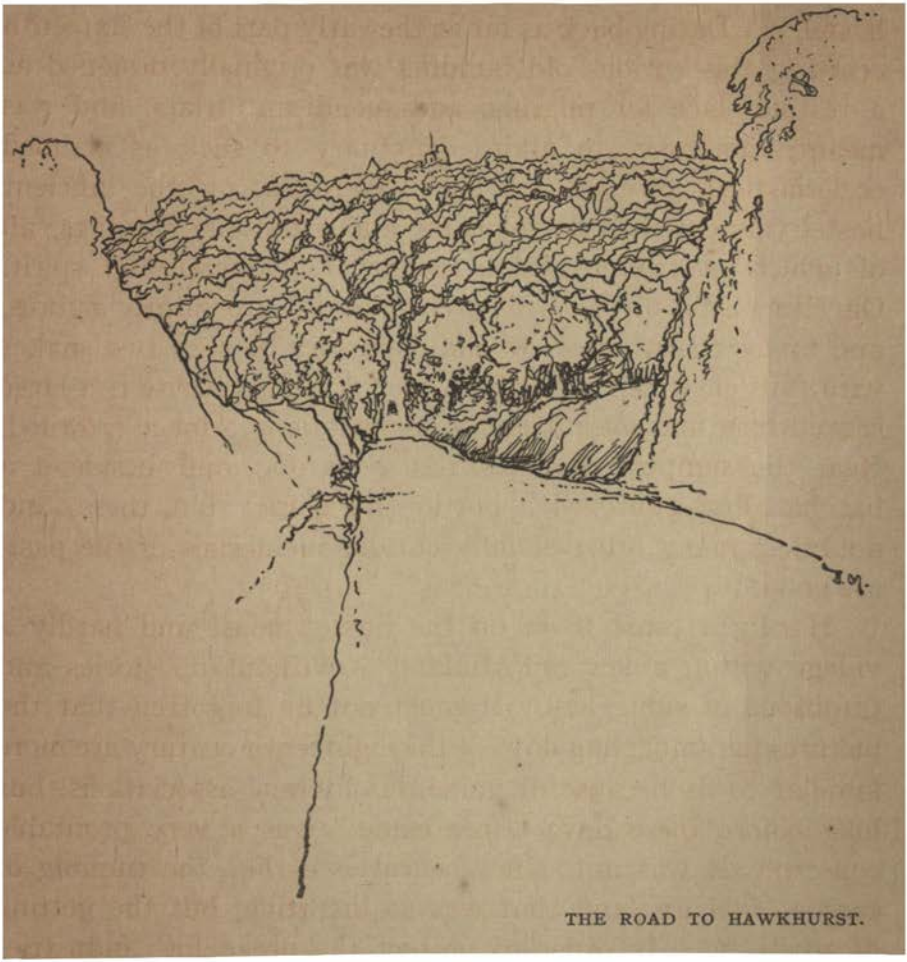
Alfriston boasts of retaining many of the primitive features of the Middle Ages. It is one of the oldest villages—I believe it is known as a town—in Sussex. Perhaps the authorities who rule over her wish to keep to the atmosphere of the Middle Ages at midnight as realistically as possible. They have succeeded admirably, for if the streets in the Middle Ages were unlighted as they are unlighted now, how can anyone be expected to tell the difference?—which is all to the good.

The Star is one of the oldest inns in the country and thoroughly looks the part. As Harrison Ainsworth so vividly writes in *Ovingdean Grange*, I will quote from that romance verbatim.

"The Star at Alfriston, happily still existing, is one of the best specimens to be met with of an ancient English hostelry. Dating back as far as the early part of the sixteenth century, this curious old building was originally designed as a resting-place for pilgrims and mendicant friars, and was meant, moreover, to afford sanctuary to such as claimed ecclesiastical protection. The woodwork of the ancient hostelry is enriched with quaint and grotesque carvings, all of which are imbued with mediæval character and spirit. On either side of the wide-arched portal are saintly figures, and under the windows of the door may be seen two snakes with tails entwined. At the corner of the structure is a large carved lion, and over it two apes sustaining a mace crowned. Near the signpost there used to be a dog, and beside it a bacchanalian figure with bottle and glass; but these, and doubtless many other equally curious memorials of the past, are gone."

Hardly a coast town on the Sussex coast and hardly a village within a few miles inland is without its stories and traditions of smugglers. It must not be forgotten that the picturesque smuggling days of the eighteenth century are more familiar to us because of numerous literary associations, but long before these days "free trade" was a very profitable concern. It was not, a few centuries earlier, the running of cargoes *into* England that was so lucrative, but the getting of goods *out*. In order to protect the broadcloth industries of the Weald and other places the law of the land forbade the export of wool, and huge profits were made when this

law could be evaded and wool sold to merchants in France or Flanders.



THE ROAD TO HAWKHURST.

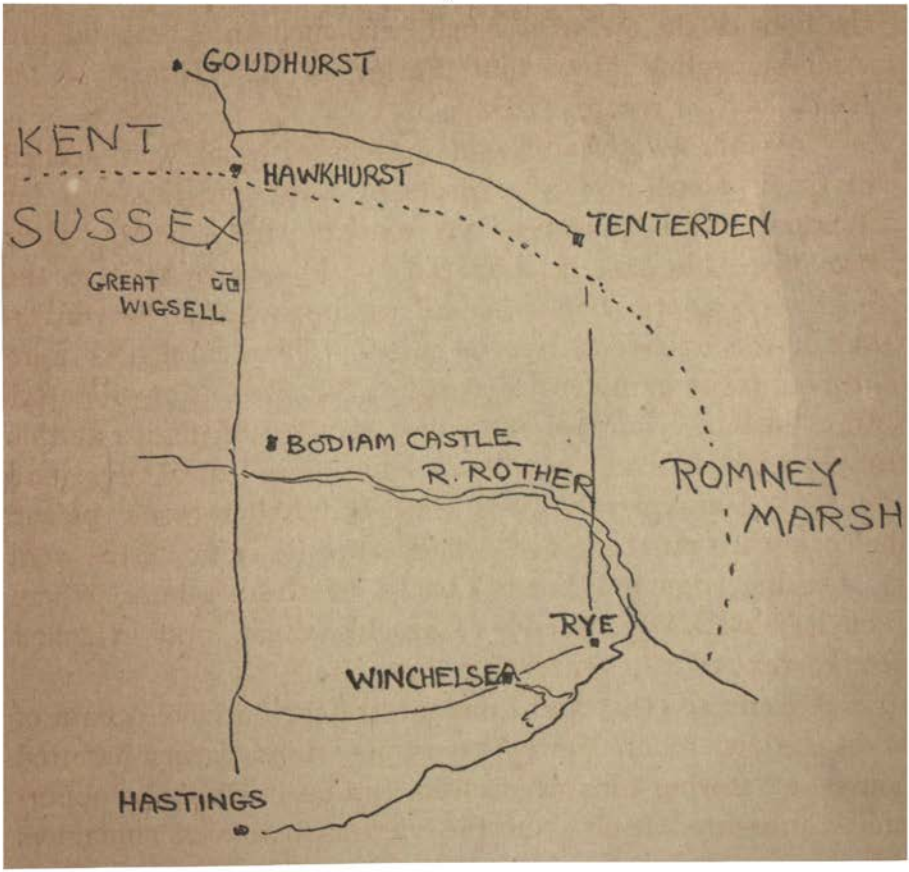
In the year 1660, for instance, the order against exportation of wool as well as that of fuller's earth was more strictly

enforced than ever before. Wool smugglers were called *Owlers* on account, it is supposed, of their nocturnal activities, or, as some have held, because they were in the habit of using the hoot of the owl as a signal. To such an extent did this wool smuggling grow that Furley in his *History of the Weald of Kent* records (1688) :

" Within two years 40,000 packs of wool were landed in Calais alone from the coasts of Kent and Sussex ; for Romney Marsh men were not content with exporting their own wool, but bought it in the Weald, conveyed it to the coast and shipped it off, while all attempts to secure a conviction of the offenders were defeated. These smugglers were not men in the humbler walks of life, but persons of property, and even some who had the administration of justice at this time, which does not appear to have flowed in a very pure channel. Consequently, very few convictions took place; the coast-men set the law at defiance, openly carrying the wool at shearing time on horses' backs to the seashore, where French vessels were ready to receive them, and attacked fiercely anyone who ventured to interfere."

Between the coast and London stretched a whole chain of caves, cellars, moated granges, crypts, ruins, farms, haunted houses, all storing tubs which were run on in stages as opportunity presented itself. Of the various bands of smugglers carrying on these inland operations the Hawkhurst Gang is perhaps the best known. The parish of Hawkhurst, although mostly in Kent, also extends just into Sussex, so part at least of Hawkhurst belongs to Smuggling Sussex, and at a point

about two miles south, on the road to Hastings, lies the old manor house of Great Wigsell, a house that knows not a few secrets of these " free trade " operations.




After terrorizing the whole countryside between Hawkhurst and the sea, this notorious band of ruffians was at last laid by the heels. Five were convicted at Chichester and

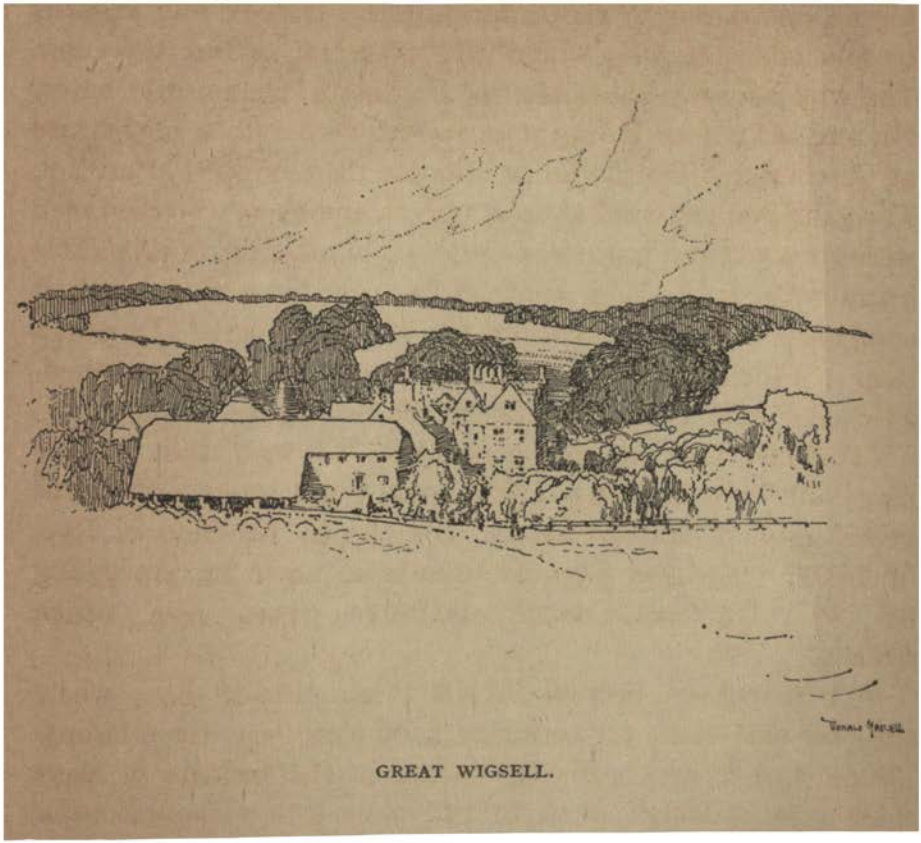
hanged in chains (1749), and in the same year several others were caught and convicted at East Grinstead.

The difficulty of getting a conviction was considerable, for no one dared to give information. It took four months to find one man who would give evidence against the gang. The witness was a shoemaker of Fordingbridge named Chater. He and a Custom House man rode together to a magistrate at Chichester. On the Sussex border they stopped at an inn. The gang had got wind of their arrival, and these wretched men were tortured and murdered under circumstances of incredible brutality. It is said that within an hour five hundred smugglers could be "mobilized" at Hawkhurst. To put a stop to their activities the Gondhurst Militia was formed. Pitched battles occurred between the two armies.

The last fight in this connection between the revenue men and a smuggling gang took place only eighty-five years ago at Camber Castle. Mr. A. G. Bradley, of Rye, in his *Old Gate of England*, quotes a paper on smuggling by Mr. Durrant Cooper sixty-five years ago, which reads:

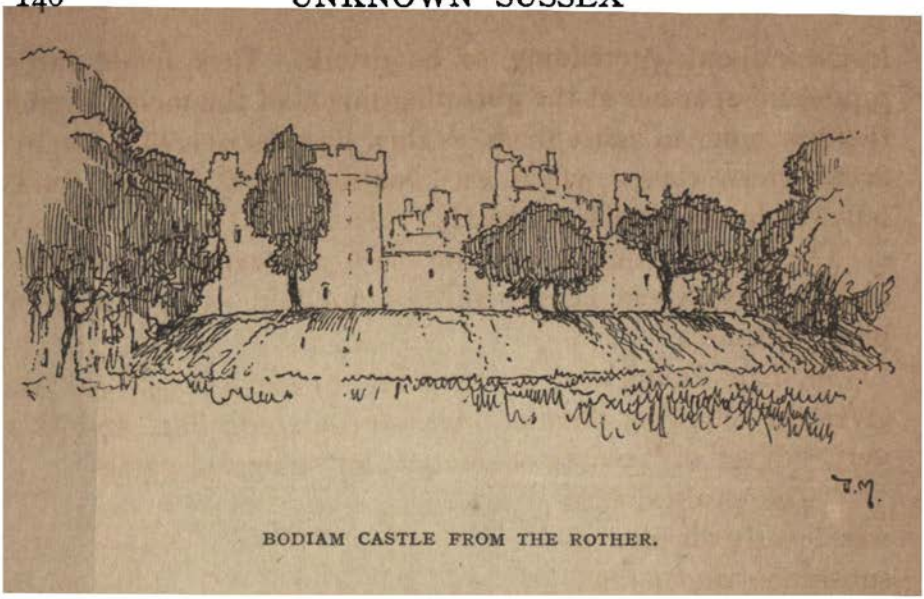
"I have been present myself at a house in Rye, where silks for sale were mysteriously produced from their hiding-places, and it has been the custom of the farmers to leave their gates unlocked at night and to broach without scruple the half anker of Schiedam considerately left in a rick or outhouse as an acknowledgment. This and the brandy were carried in four gallon tubs, swung over men's shoulders or over the backs of pack-horses."

The dodges to outwit the revenue men were numerous. We read of false keels to fishing smacks, of the submerged towing of kegs by means of a rope through the rudder, a



GREAT WIGSELL.

rope that could be dropped if the vessel should be under observation. Automatically the "goods" would anchor themselves till fished up.



BODIAM CASTLE FROM THE ROTHER.

A good story of smugglers' ready wit is told. I forget where it happened, however. The night was a fine one and the free traders had sunk some tubs in a pond. After lying low for a while and keeping well out of the neighbourhood to allay suspicion they decided on this particular nocturnal fishing expedition, because of the full moon. They had a horse and cart ready, and with hooks and poles were in the very act of releasing the tubs from the bottom of the pond, when a most disconcerting thing happened. An excise officer appeared on horseback.

He asked them what they were doing. The moon was now well up and clearly reflected on the still surface of the water. Without any audible pre-arrangment the smugglers

lurched about, pretending to be drunk. They made futile prods and splashes at the glittering image of the moon, urging the newcomer to assist them, as they had discovered a magnificent green cheese which was floating about in the pond, but which they could not reach.

The revenue officer rode off with a laugh of contempt, and the smugglers landed their cargo and carried it to a place of safety.

Mr. Eric Holmes, in his very interesting *Seaward Sussex*, gives the following illuminating note on smuggling, and this very subject of "places of safety" for smuggled goods.

"The professionals were nearly all men of substance and standing in the land. The marine smuggler was of course a separate breed whose adventures and danger were of a different sort, and, despite the glamour of the sea, of much less interest and excitement; on the other hand, most of the inhabitants of such places as Alfriston had one or more of the

BODIAM CASTLE, INTERIOR, MAIN GATEWAY.

male members of the family engaged in the trade, and many are the houses which still have secret vaults and chambers for the reception of the goods, chiefly wine, brandy, silk and tea. Most of the churches between Seaford and Lewes have at one time or another proved convenient temporary storage places, and on more than one occasion Sunday service has had to be suspended, on one excuse or another, until the building could be cleared of its congregation of tubs. Lower records that at Selmeston the smugglers actually used an altar tomb as a store for spirits, always leaving a tub for the parson."

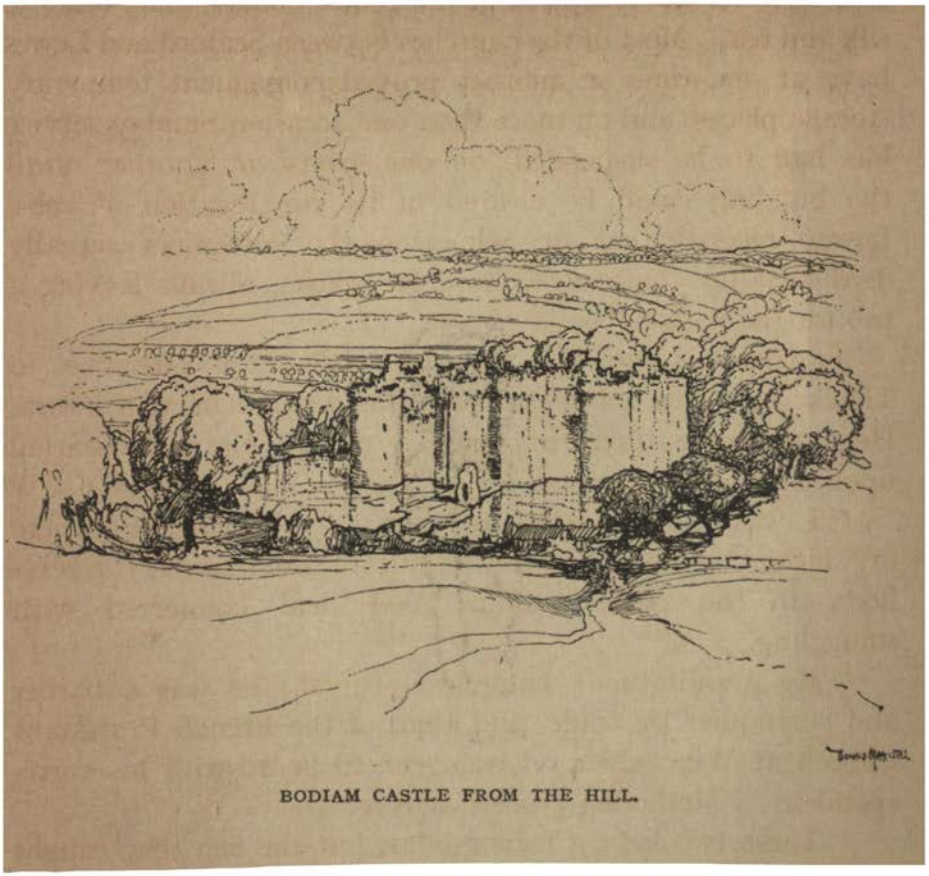
I cannot leave this subject without a reference to Thackeray's *Denis Duval*, which was written in Winchelsea. Here are some fragments, chosen merely for their bearing upon smuggling matters.

"I was born in the year 1764, at Winchelsea, where my father was a grocer and clerk of the church. Everybody in the place was a good deal connected with smuggling. . . ."

"My grandfather's name was Duval; he was a barber and perruquier by trade, and elder of the French Protestant Church at Winchelsea. I was sent to board with his correspondent, a Methodist grocer, at Rye.

"These two kept a fishing-boat, but the fish they caught was many and many a barrel of Nantz brandy, which we landed—never mind where—at a place to us well known. . . . We used to go out at night and meet ships from the French coast. . . . How well I remember the jabbering of

the Frenchmen the first night as they handed the kegs over to us! . . . I wouldn't go on with the smuggling:

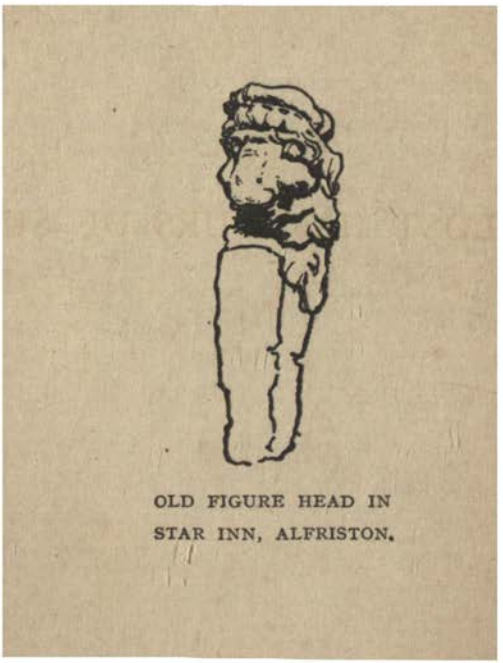


BODIAM CASTLE FROM THE HILL.

being converted by Mr. Wesley, who came to preach to us at Rye."

Before leaving this subject I must show you a view of

Bodiam Castle. It was one of those unexpected glimpses of a well-known place obtained by accident. I had been sketching Great Wigsell, and came upon the Castle from a hill. It is not the stock point of view, approaching from the river level, but not the less interesting for that.



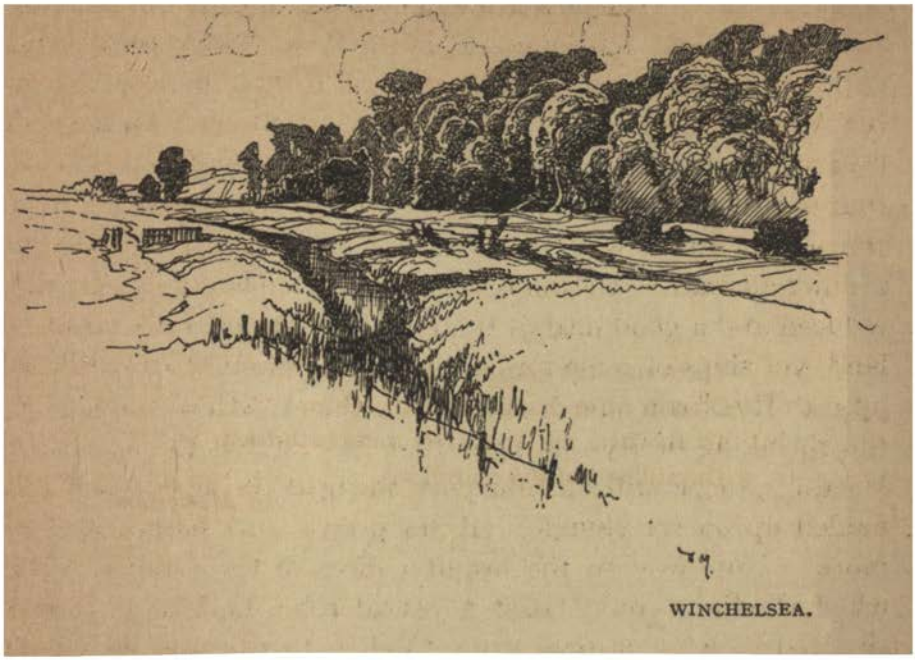
OLD FIGURE HEAD IN STAR INN, ALFRISTON.

# IX

# THE LOST HARBOURS OF SUSSEX

There rolls the deep where grows the tree.
O earth what changes hast thou seen!
There where the long street roars hath been
The stillness of the central sea.

*In Memoriam.*



WINCHELSEA.

# THE LOST HARBOURS OF SUSSEX

THIS is a chapter of change and decay, of dead canals, of ruined tide-mills, of grass-grown fairways, and of lost causes generally.

It is rather a difficult task to classify the lost harbours of Sussex, for every variety of loss is represented among them. Some have been lost and found again, as Bosham; some, like Rye, have never been entirely lost; and one, Pagham, has

been deliberately mislaid by Act of Parliament. However, of the most entirely defunct harbours which were of any size or importance, Winchelsea and Pevensey are the outstanding examples. The harbours of both these places are fields enclosed by sea walls. Other examples, such as Steyning on the Adur, occur to me. As a harbour, where once an English fleet rode at anchor, now fallen to an insignificant stream running through green fields that have been reclaimed from the sea, it might well be described as "lost." Rye is in a different case. Although the area of anchorage is greatly reduced and a good deal of tidal estuary turned into meadow land, yet ships of some ten or eleven feet draught can still get up into Rye town, and it is as much the growth of tonnage as the shrinking of Rye harbour that has altered the situation. Hastings, too, is still a fishing port, the boats being beached and hauled up on the shingle, but its quays and basins are no more. Time was, in the brighter days of the Cinque Ports, when Hastings could boast a considerable harbour. It was situated in what is now Priory Valley to the west of Castle Hill. The Rev. Ian C. Hannah, in his *Sussex Coast*, writes, "The Albert Memorial Clock Tower stands where of old ships were moored; it was scoured by the River Old Roar and protected by the headland of White Rock. When so much shingle had accumulated to the west of this obstruction that there was no room for more, then began the filling up of the mouth of the port, while to make matters worse the site of the town kept wearing away and whole parishes went under the waves. The gradual ruin of the port was the subject of bitter

HASTINGS FROM EAST CLIFF

complaint, but nothing whatever could be done to prevent the action of the sea. The centre of English sea power was being shifted by purely physical causes to the harbours of the west."

After the catastrophe of the loss of its harbour it looked as though Hastings would soon disappear like Winchelsea and Pevensey, that is as a seaport, but in spite of the harbour disappearing the sea remained faithful. This made all the difference, and the combined effect of the fishing industry and the recommendation by doctors of Hastings as a health resort, a practice which became fashionable in about 1750, gave the town a new lease of life, and now a continuous front of some two and a half miles in length carries old Hastings into modern St. Leonards.

Pevensey, as we have seen, like Winchelsea is a classic case of a Sussex harbour deserted by the sea. It stands one mile from the sea wall. On page 160 I have sketched two rough maps which indicate the nature and extent of the changed coast line. All the flat regions named "level," Horse-eye level, Down level, etc., are reclaimed areas. The dotted line represents the old seashore, so that it is apparent that Pevensey stood at the entrance to an arm of the sea round which Hailsham, Hurstmonceux and Wartling were ports.

Much debate has raged around Pevensey in connection with Cæsar's landing, Professor Airey having developed a theory, backed by considerable learning, that it was here and not in Kent that the Romans first set foot upon our shores. The battle of theories has been a stirring one, no less a general

than the Emperor Napoleon taking an active part therein. After a considerable lapse of time, and still more discovery and research, the consensus of opinion amongst antiquaries has been in favour of Kent rather than Sussex.

The difficulty of the whole matter is that Cæsar in his commentaries describes places naturally without being able to give them names, and these descriptions might answer to various localities. He describes that on reaching the coast he saw the enemy upon the cliffs, but not thinking it an advisable landing-place decided to wait until the remainder of his fleet had come up. Then finding both tide and wind in his favour (alas, he does not give any directions) he weighed anchor, and sailed about eight miles further on, anchoring again beside a low and open coast. The Britons attempted to oppose the landing with horsemen and chariots, but were finally driven off. The Romans then drove the Britons into the woods. All this is very interesting, but it does not throw much light on the locality. The scenery would do equally well for many places upon the coast of Kent and Sussex. For instance, the champions of the Deal site affirm that this engagement took place to the north of Canterbury in the valley of the Stour, somewhere near Sturry and Fordwich. The champions of Hythe as the place of landing believe that Cæsar, leaving the forest country on his left, marched to Wye on the Stour. Professor Airey, however, makes this march from Pevensey to Robertsbridge in Sussex, the river not being the Stour but the Rother.

Pevensey has been identified as a Roman station, and there

BLAKE'S COTTAGE AT FELPHAM

is no doubt of it as a Roman harbour. It is generally considered to be the city of Anderida, but on this point there is some room for doubt. The great forest of Andred gave its name to various places, and by some antiquaries a dis-

PEVENSEY CASTLE.

tinction has been made between the British town and the Roman fortress, both bearing the same name. Furley, in his *Weald of Kent*, sums up the evidence as follows :—

"The last writer I have to deal with is Mr. Lewin, who

in his paper already alluded to, on the Castra of Littus Saxonicum . . . tells us that the general, if not the universal, voice is now in favour of Pevensey; and as his etymology of Anderida differs from that of the earlier writers, I will give it. He says—

> *'The castrum of Anderida took its name from the Great Forest, which on the land side pressed upon it on the north, east, and west. The etymology must be sought for in the Celtic language, in which Anderida signifies the Black Forest. Thus (to resolve the word into its elements)* an *is "the,"* deru *"oak forest," and* dy *is "black," signifying "the Black Forest,"—an appropriate name for the vast forest, the counterpart in England of the Black Forest in Germany.'*

"But I must bring my notice of this long-pending controversy to a close by confessing, after weighing well what has been so ably written *pro* and *con*, that I arrive, though with some hesitation, at the same conclusion as the late Mr. Sandys, namely, that the Roman and the British Anderida were *not* one and the same city, but that the British city was at Newenden and the Roman station at Pevensey. It should be kept in view that the total demolition of a rude British city was a very different affair from the destruction of a Roman station. . . . It should also be remembered that Kent, Sussex, and Surrey abound in places possessing the same names."

Whatever doubts exist as to the honour of Pevensey being a place of landing for the Romans, the fact that William

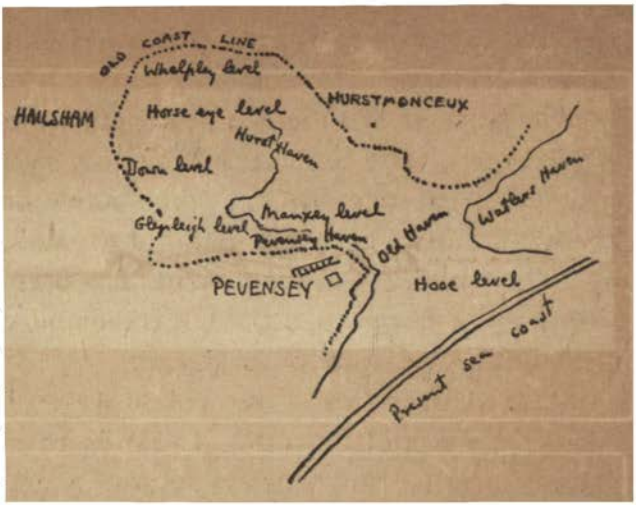
OFF RYE

the Conqueror landed here brings it into the limelight of English history.

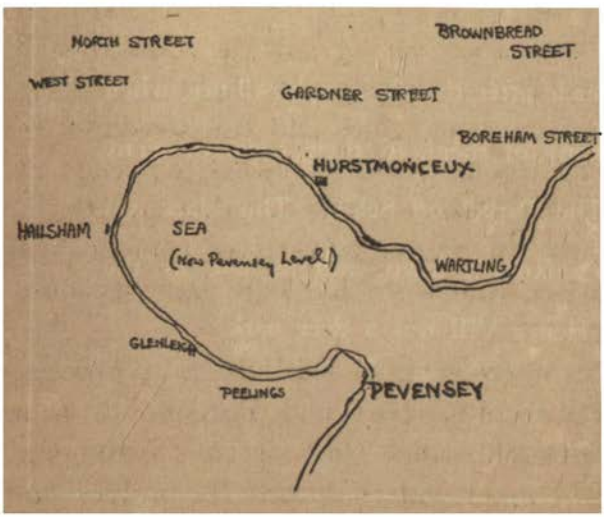
The harbour, with which we are chiefly concerned, was then a good one. The Romans had done very little in the way of reclaiming the marshes, and the shingle drift, that persistent enemy of Sussex harbours, had not as yet seriously threatened it. The " inning " of the marshes has been the cause of much silting up of fairways, although the engineers that did it were not sufficiently aware of its danger.

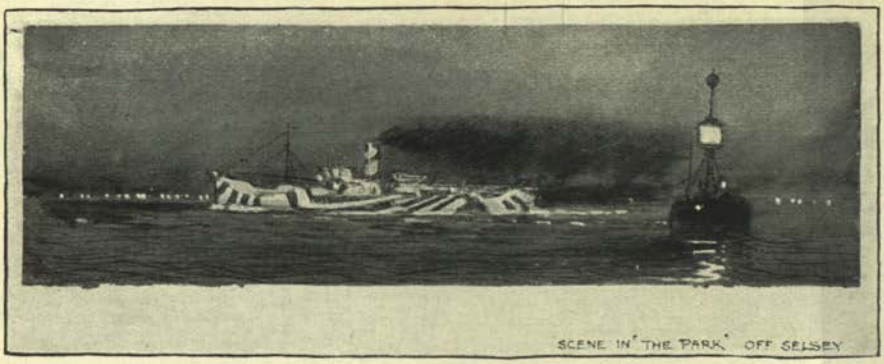
Where there is a narrow neck of water, broadening out into various arms and estuaries it stands to reason that a large volume of water must rush in and out again at the rise and fall of the tides. Thus a clear channel is more or less assured. However, if a great deal of the land is walled in, so that it will not be covered at high water, the volume of water running in and out is considerably reduced and the scouring effect is less effective. At last, when nearly all the tide-covered saltings have become fields, the scouring is so slight that silting up will take place. Given a few gales and the assistance of shingle drift, and the harbour is closed. This happened at New Romney, where the Rother found another mouth, at Seaford where the Ouse by its vagaries gave rise to *New Haven*, and at Winchelsea which was left high and dry on a plain of pebbles.

As an example of the converse of this silting-up process, take Portsmouth. Between Gosport and Portsmouth is a bottle-neck entrance through which the tide runs with some force. Further inland, broad waters spread themselves out




and thus a great deal of water is on the move. Instead of reclaiming land and thus reducing the volume of scouring water, the Admiralty by much dredging and deepening of the channels of these estuaries has actually increased the tidal rush very considerably. So alive is the Admiralty of to-day as to the effect either of dredging or reclaiming upon the run of the tides that it is a common jest in Rochester that a man without authority taking home a pail of water or throwing a stone in the Medway will sooner or later have to reckon with Whitehall.

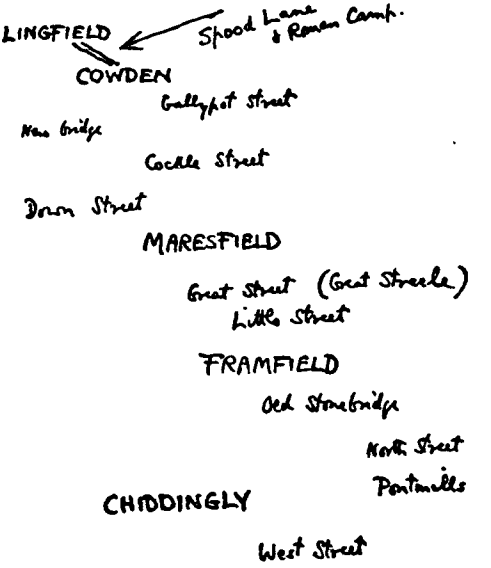





## The Owers Lightship

This impression, made after the close of hostilities, when ships were still, many of them, in their coats of many colours, shows "The Park," off Selsey. This place was once the site of a Roman town, and as late as the reign of Henry VIII was a deer park.

The reclamation of most of the "levels" went on from time to time after the conquest. Holinshed tells us that "diuerse waters doo resort into Peuenseie hauen," and reveals the fact that the reclamation was not an easy matter. When soon after his time the "inning" was completed the harbour also ceased to be and the shingle bank, now unscoured, soon piled itself up into more or less the present coast line.




The far west of Sussex exhibits almost every kind of lost harbour. There is Chichester still struggling on in attenuated connection with the sea. The canal which once connected it with the river Arun at a point near Ford junction is now defunct and grassgrown like similar sections near Pulborough and Billingshurst that once kept open navigation between the Thames at Weybridge and Littlehampton.

While in this part of the coast, although it has nothing to do with lost harbours, it will be desirable to make a pilgrimage to Blake's cottage at Felpham near Bognor. The cottage is somewhat built in now, but previously it stood facing the sea, but at some distance from it. I have made a sketch of

it in the evening light, from a position which just shows a distant glimpse of the light on the water. There is nothing very striking about the cottage, but it is interesting as the place where Blake wrote :

" Away to sweet Felpham, for Heaven is there ;
The Ladder of Angels descends through the air ;
On the turret its spiral does softly descend
Through the village then winds, at my cot it does end.

" You stand in the village and look up to heaven ;
The Precious stones glitter on flight seventy-seven ;
And my brother is there, and my friends and thine
Descend and ascend with the bread and the wine.

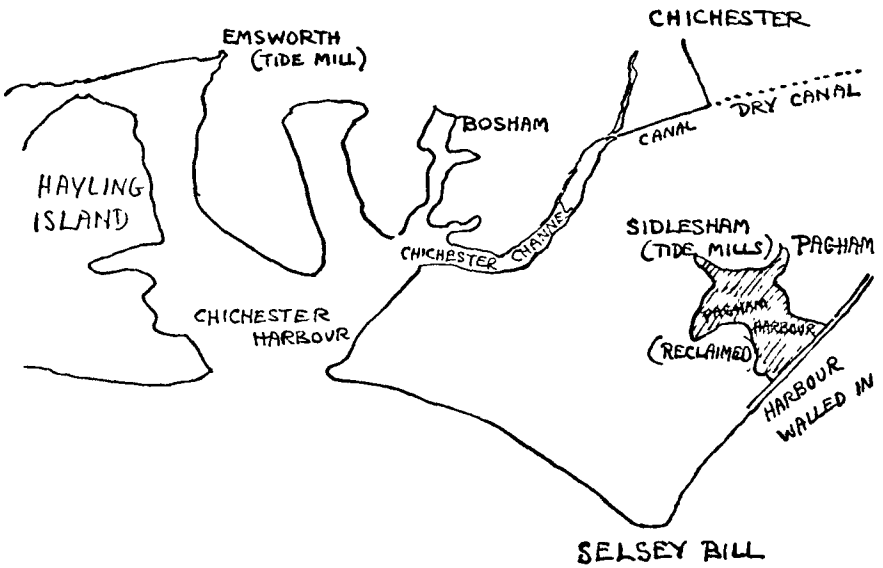
" The bread of sweet thought and the wine of delight
Feed the village of Felpham by day and by night,
And at his own door the bless'd hermit does stand,
Dispensing unceasing to all the wide land."

William Blake lived for three years in this little house and it was here that he communed with the spirits of the Hebrew Prophets, Homer, Dante, and Milton. It was here too that he was arrested and tried on the trumped-up charge of sedition and treason. He was acquitted, but he left Felpham for good immediately afterwards.

Before we go on to Bosham just have a look at the map and note the name places going north from Pevensey which was a Roman station. Those in capitals are *known* Roman ironworks, Chiddingly, Framfield, Maresfield, Cowden, Lingfield. I wonder if there was a road for the carrying of iron

NEWHAVEN

and other commodities. I form no theory, having as yet insufficient evidence, but merely call attention to the names. Pontmills (*Pons, pontis*, a bridge, as in Pontefract), Old Stonebridge, Great Streele and Little Streele (probably a misspelling, on the old Ordnance Survey they are Great Street and Little




Street, etc.). Will someone more learned than I look into the matter? Spood Lane is an old cinder road made from slag of iron furnaces.

Bosham, that ancient seaport depicted in the Bayeux tapestry, beloved of artists and perhaps painted by them more than any other place in England, is another dying harbour.

In fact, it has actually been " officially " dead, for early in the nineteenth century enterprising landowners who thought corn-growing land would be more valuable than the small trade of its tidal waters actually " inned " Bosham, building a dam across the creek east of Chidham. In 1822, however, a great storm broke down the dyke and Bosham became a harbour again and has remained one ever since.

I feel very conceited at being the only artist who has depicted Sussex and resisted the temptation of drawing Bosham harbour at low tide. It always seems to be low tide at Bosham. The tide seems to have a way of going down rather than coming up. It may be that this phenomenon accounts for Canute, who is credited with having commanded the sea to go down at this place, choosing the locality as one likely to give him some sporting chance in his unequal contest with the forces of nature.

Undaunted by the unsuccessful effort at closing Bosham harbour the people of Pagham secured an Act of Parliament to enable them to reclaim the area of Pagham harbour. This was in 1873, and three years afterwards the area was successfully walled in and planted with crops.

Things went very well for thirty-four years, and then in the December gale of 1910 the sea broke in and did great damage. However, the resuscitation of Pagham as a harbour was short-lived and it is still dry land. Incidentally this scheme abolished the utility of the tide-mills of Sidlesham. There is a tide-mill at Emsworth (part of which is in Sussex) still in working order. These tide-mills of Sidlesham were once of

A SHOWER OFF HASTINGS

great importance, having three water-wheels and doing all the milling for the rich corn lands around them. They have now been pulled down.

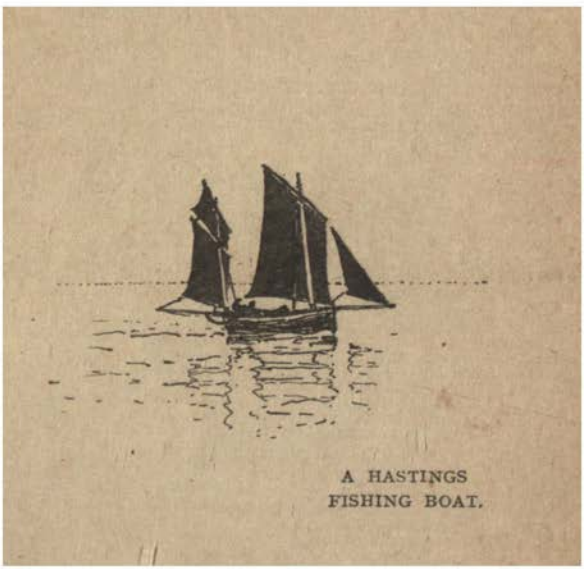
I know this flat Selsey peninsula best from the sea, for during the war it was my lot for a time to patrol inshore along this coast. Often we would drop anchor in the lee of "the

OFF CHICHESTER.

park," a shoal which in the time of Henry VIII. was a deer park.

I suppose, as this corner of Sussex was comparatively lively in these days, several small harbours may be "lost" beneath the waves. I have reproduced here a sketch made from the waters off Portsmouth, not because it is very exciting,

but because it shows the distant prospect of Chichester Cathedral, and is interesting as emphasizing the remarkable fact that although England is sea-girt and having no city very far from salt water, only one cathedral in the whole land is visible from the sea.



A HASTINGS FISHING BOAT.

# X

# DEAD FIRES

Master Huggett and his man John
They did cast the first can-nón.

*Old Rhyme.*

ORDNANCE PLACE.

## DEAD FIRES

I KNEW that Brown's enthusiasm for historical research in the direction of iron would not end with our mild and easy-going collection of hammer ponds and furnace woods. This was merely the overture to a movement in many acts in which Brown doubled the rôle of hero and choragus, the rest of us playing our various subordinate parts as directed. By the rest of us I mean the brave spirits Brown succeeded in collecting to join him in his great enterprise of making an historical survey of Sussex in respect of its defunct iron industry.

Like most great movements that have shaken the foundations of the civilized world the Confraternity of the Historical Investigators of the Sussex Iron Age had small beginnings. It began at a picnic. Its inner circle consisted of no more than five people besides Brown—to wit, Eve and myself, our family, Scylla and Charybdis, and a naval man who was with us and whom I will hereinafter refer to as Captain X, all destined to hold high office in Brown's army of research.

By the time we all assembled at G.H.Q. during August the numbers had grown somewhat. Eve had ingeniously interested some eight people in the scheme, all of whom happened to have cars, which was great gain. Scylla, who was a Girl Guide, produced a legion of fellow workers, with a captain and lieutenant. Charybdis, not to be outdone, arrived with a swarm of Brownies, some several feet high, a Brown Owl, and all the machinery of enterprise and discipline. Captain X brought two of his junior officers and a car. I produced a consulting engineer, an R.E. captain in the Ordnance Survey, a lady artist, and the great-nephew of an ironfounder. Brown was good enough to say that the discovery of this last adherent to the party was a touch of genius on my part. So much for the *dramatis personæ* in which should be included men-at-arms, villagers, policemen, retainers, and ghost. Scene : various parts of Sussex.

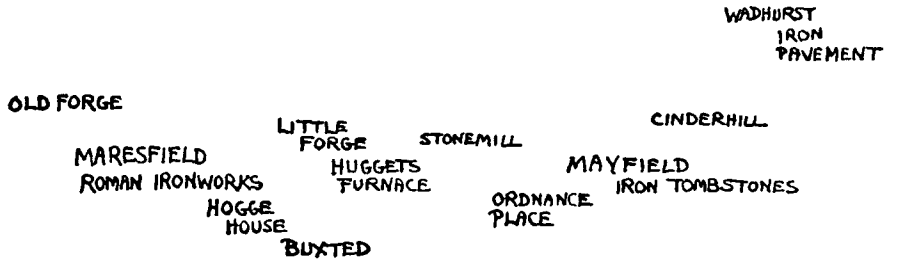
We assembled on the banks of a hammer pond. Brown thought that this environment would give the right atmosphere in which to send us off to our different tasks. He stood upon

a piece of ancient stone wall, probably the foundations of a structure which had once carried a water-wheel, and gave us a stirring address, which was very uncomplimentary to antiquaries in general, who he accused of basely neglecting a subject of enormous historical interest, the growth, power, and decay of the industry on which a great deal of our naval supremacy had been maintained. Now, however, that the members of the Confraternity of the Historical Investigators of the Sussex Iron Age were about to start on their great work it would not be long before the whole subject would be thrashed out and what was not known about the Lost Iron Age would not be worth knowing. He anticipated a time when history books would be re-written, and such improbable and far-fetched stories as Alfred and the Cakes and Canute and the Inaccurate Tide Table would give place to true tales of the Black Country of the Middle Ages, and the influence of Sussex Iron on the doctrine of the Balance of Power.

We all felt very enthusiastic and not a little important. Then Brown sent us off in various capacities all over the iron regions of Sussex, which means practically all Sussex except the Downs and south of them.

We were graded into five departments.

I. *The Water-power Department*, of which I had the honour to be captain, responsible for the discovery of hammer ponds, sluices, inquiry into possibly falsely described hammer ponds, and tracking down of lost ponds, as at Heathfield, that have been filled up, drained, or planted; inquiry into the states of flour mills or paper mills that may be the successors of iron

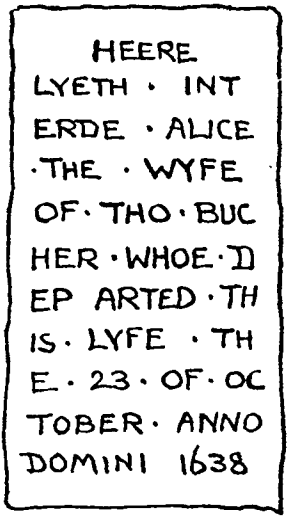



CONCERNING IRON.

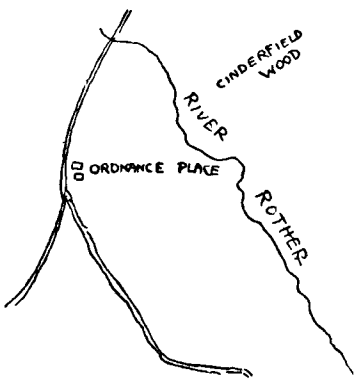
works, as at Ifield, where a flour mill uses the water-power embanked by the ironmasters.

II. *The Nomenclature Department*, responsible for the verification of all clues to be found upon the map, as Cinderhill, Forge Farm, Waste Wood, Hammer Moors, Five Chimneys, Redbrook, Stone Mill, Culver Wood, Thunder Hill (near Heathfield, possibly used for testing ordnance ?), Boring Farm (at Buxted, probably something to do with the boring shop for making the wooden guns as models for the moulds for casting), Well Wood (sometimes Well is a corruption of Bell, and Well Wood may be Bell Wood, *i.e.* the source of fuel supply for travelling bell founders that we can read of in our studies of mediæval arts), Furnace Farm and scores of similarly suspicious names occurring again and again in the primrose-covered glades of lonely woodlands in places which in Falstaff's day were so black with the ashes of blast furnaces that he would not of them, even in his delirium, have babbled of green fields.

III. *Geological Department,* to determine the nature of certain formations to be found in the iron country. There are, for instance, many steep tree-covered banks in the woods which are not natural, but "made," and cinder hills and slag-heaps. There are deep ponds to be found which are not hammer ponds, but probably pits for the excavation of ore. These have been filled with water and appear to be ordinary ponds, but they are not. Owing to their locality they could not have been worth while making for the sake of collecting water which abounds elsewhere.




MEMORIAL SLAB IN WADHURST CHURCH.




ORDNANCE PLACE AND CINDERFIELD WOOD.

This work was put under the command of Captain X, and my friend, the consulting engineer, became his first lieutenant.

IV. *Local Intelligence Department,* nominally under the direction of Scylla, but actually directed by the captain of the Guides. The duty of this department was to interrogate the inhabitants of villages, and find out what they

knew about the iron industry, generally nothing at all, and to collect what they could of the traditional stories. This department did yeoman service, for with the assurance of extreme youth and complete confidence that their work was of immense and immediate importance to the safety of the realm they interrogated everybody they met, often with startling effect. At Ashburnham Furnace they actually ran down a man whose grandfather had worked in the last blast furnace in the south, closed down in 1825.

V. *Tombstone Department.*—This was nominally in charge of Charybdis, by virtue of her being a foundation member, but actually run by the Brown Owl. The Tombstone Department, in spite of its name, was the jolliest and most irrepressible of all the exploring parties. The duty of its members was to go into every churchyard and report every iron headstone, noting its date. The extraordinary sight of packs of merry little Brownies, swarming like curious rodents over the graves, peering hither and thither in the quest of iron headstones, was one that often astonished the natives. One old woman who beheld the strange spectacle was rather short-sighted. She related to her neighbour when she arrived home that she came all over queer as she saw little brown goblins coming up out of the graves, and very nearly provided a new ghost story for the village.

The effect of all this organized and disorganized enthusiasm may be better imagined than described. Enthusiasts seldom pause to inquire whether the subject they have at heart is interesting to anybody else, and the enthusiasm of Brown's

A CORNER OF WADHURST.

myrmidons was worked up to such a pitch that it was positively dangerous.

You can picture for yourself the bewilderment of a somewhat inarticulate country labourer in a somewhat sleepy village in the rural heart of Sussex being confronted with a curious assortment of people making the wildest and most incoherent inquiries about iron. In vain did he try to appease them by directing them to the nearest ironmonger's. He would relate his experience at the Plough and Harrow the same evening, and the opinion of the sages of the village was that this quest of mediæval iron was merely a blind and that all these mysterious people, even the members of the Tombstone Department, were in the pay of the armament ring and were seeking to exploit Sussex for some Armstrong and possibly even for Krupp's. You never knew. Anyhow, they didn't hold with it and would not encourage these would-be pioneers by giving any information whatever.

For three days Brown sat at G.H.Q. surrounded by maps and receiving reports. For three days cars dashed hither and thither loaded with Guides, Brownies, and other experts. Exciting reports came in almost hourly. I left my department in charge of the grand-nephew of the ironfounder, and returned to G.H.Q. which I left from time to time on predatory dashes with my sketch-book to make records of various things discovered. A telegram came from the Tombstone Department:

*Good examples Withyham, Mayfield earliest Burwash*

*latest Wadhurst 1799 fine example iron pavement chancel Charybdis.*

I followed up this last clue immediately. I have made a note, page 54, showing the arrangement of iron "flags" which form the floor of the chancel in Wadhurst Church. The quaint arrangement of letters in one I have scribbled down, but it must not be taken as a representation, but as a diagram (p. 173). There are also a good number of these iron "brasses" let into the floor at the entrance to the church, but these do not form a continuous pavement as in the chancel. I had expected to find these examples of ironwork interesting because they were so rare, but I was agreeably surprised to find them sterling examples of art. The deep and curious quality of colour, a sort of soft brown-black, is very pleasing. I believe in dress materials this tint is known as elephant grey. I don't know why it should so be described as the effect is neither grey nor the colour of an elephant. However, I suppose I am out of my depth when talking of colours in dress material. How, for instance, has the colour known as crushed strawberry got its name? If you crush a strawberry for hours it will never yield such a tint. "Yes, it will," cry my indignant lady friends, "if you put cream with it!" Then why in the name of common sense isn't it called strawberry and cream?

Outside the church are other examples of iron headstones, or headirons, if we are purists in nomenclature. The most interesting of these is the top of a brick tomb

HUGGETT'S FURNACE MILL

to the south side of the chancel on account of its date which is as late as 1799. This shows, if we are right in the assumption that it is of local manufacture, that the district round Wadhurst was one of the last to close down their ironworks. It is within twenty-six years of the last furnace fire in Sussex.

One of the objectives of the Confraternity of the Historical Investigators of the Sussex Iron Age was the discovery of the place where the first cannon in England was cast. This was to come later, but Brown had got up the subject as well as he could from Holinshed, who gives the following details under *England in the Sixteenth Century.*

The names of our greatest ordnance are commonly these:

Robinet whose weight is two hundred pounds and it hath one inch and a quarter within the mouth.

Falconet weigheth five hundred pounds, and his wideness is two inches within the mouth.

Falcon has eight hundred pounds, and two and a half inches within the mouth.

Minion has eight hundred pounds, and two inches and a half within the mouth.

Sacre hath fifteen hundred pounds, and is three inches and a half in the mouth.

Demy Culverin weigheth three thousand pounds, and is four inches and a half within the mouth.

Culverin hath four thousand pounds and five inches and a half within the mouth.

Demy Cannon hath six thousand pounds and six inches and a half within the mouth.

Cannon hath seven thousand pounds and eight inches within the mouth.

E. Cannon hath eight thousand pounds and seven inches within the mouth.

Basilisk hath nine thousand pounds, and eight inches and three-quarters within the mouth.

Curiously enough we had something tangible on this subject of the casting of the first cannon, because the thing is still in existence. It is now to be seen in the British Museum, and until about a century ago it stood on Eridge Green—at least I read so in a very old guide-book that I unearthed in a boarding house in Tunbridge Wells. This is not, as many suppose, the first cannon made in England, but the first one that was cast in one piece. Previously, as we have seen, a cannon was a composite work, iron sections bound together by leather bands. The mould for the castings of cannon were made in wood, probably turned in a lathe. I have often wondered whether the name Boring Farm, near Buxted, and within the immediate vicinity of ironworks, may be connected with this, and that the boring mill of the foundry gave the name. I wonder, too, whether Stonemill Farm is a name relic of the iron industry, and that it is built on or near a site where there was a mill for crushing the ironstone. Such a name in certain parts of Kent (near Maidstone) and Surrey (near Godstone) might speak of a fulling-mill, for in

their places fuller's earth is found. It is a rare product in England, and I do not know whether there is any trace of it in the neighbourhood of Buxted.

The settlements of the Flemish weavers were made in the Weald because of the proximity of fuller's earth. At Cran-

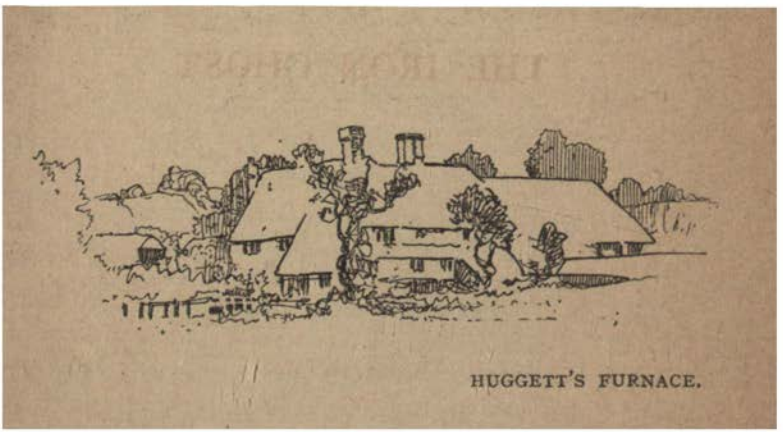
A WOODLAND MYSTERY
NEAR BUXTED.

brook, in Kent, there was sufficient water power to keep twelve mills working. Furley, in his *Weald of Kent*, writes: "Fullers earth is a mineral product being a species of clay of a greyish ash-coloured brown; also described as a fatty fossil earth abounding in nitre. It derives its name from the use to which it is applied, viz., for the fulling or milling of cloth by cleansing, scouring, and pressing it so as to render it stronger, closer and

firmer. The work was originally done by water power, and the mills were called fulling or scouring mills."

As soon as I had returned to G.H.Q. from my inspection of Wadhurst I found Brown exulting over another telegram, this time from the Local Intelligence Department. It ran thus :

*Important discovery of high embankments in woods at Little Forge by Buxted extensive hammer ponds now pasture Scylla.*



HUGGETT'S FURNACE.

# XI

# THE IRON GHOST

They hunted and they holloe'd
And the next thing that they find
Was a stack in a hayfield
And that they left behind.
The first he said it was a stack.
The second, he said Nay.
The third he said it was a church
With the steeple blown away.
And a hunting they did go, d'go, d'go.
And a hunting they did go.

*Old Song.*

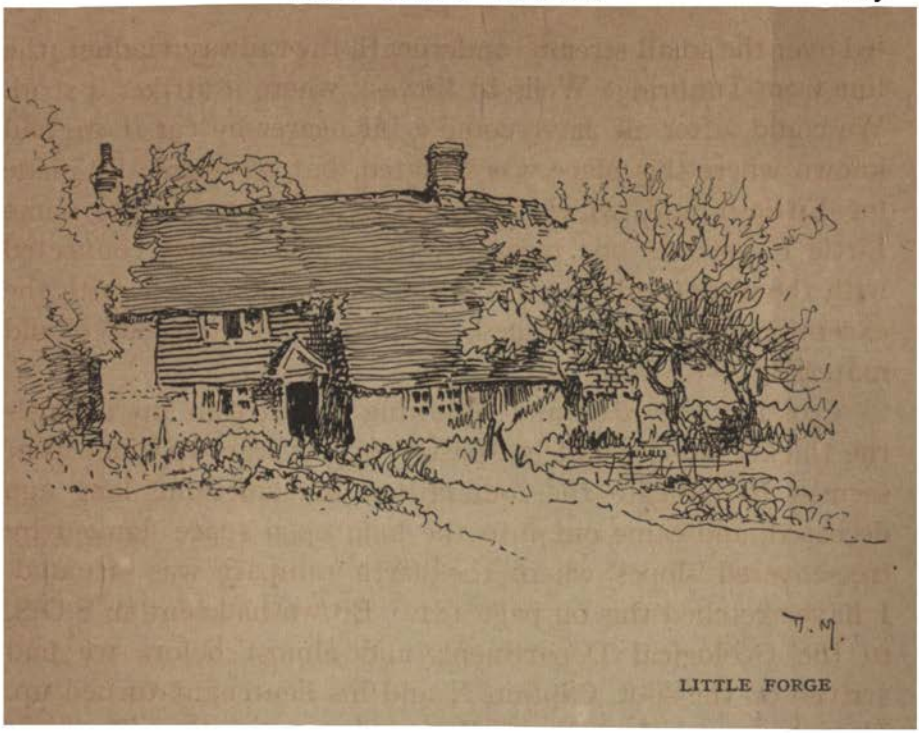
THE IRON GHOST

BROWN was so intrigued by this latest discovery that he left G.H.Q. with no one to carry on, and came with me to see the place for himself. We found Little Forge after some difficulty, as there was no road there, and had to travel the last half-mile by footpaths. We were picked up by a troupe (I don't know whether that is the right word; it sounds rather theatrical) of Girl Guides who directed us from the cottage, which I have sketched on page 187, to the scene of action where Scylla was making frantic and wrongly exposed photographic records. The path

led over the small stream, underneath the railway viaduct (the line from Tunbridge Wells to Lewes), where it strikes a road. We could, after all, have come a bit nearer by car if we had known where this place was situated, but we naturally made for Little Forge, which is a cottage. I suppose the name Little Forge was one borne by the whole hamlet connected with the works and that this is the only building left, with the exception of one stone shed, possibly built later out of old material.

Crossing the road and following the stream up towards the thickly wooded hill, we passed one overgrown ridge that seemed to indicate the foundations of something long ago deceased, and came out into the long open space flanked by tree-covered slopes where the earth rampart was situated. I have sketched this on page 181. Brown had sent an S.O.S. to the Geological Department, and almost before we had arrived on the spot, Captain X and his lieutenant turned up. They pronounced their verdict almost at sight. This was no natural formation to be accounted for by any geological theory, and it had obviously been the dam of a very large hammer pond with a " head " of water some sixteen to twenty feet in height.

After having made various measurements, and conjectured where the buildings of the forge must have stood, we struck out, again on foot, for Huggett's Furnace and Huggett's Furnace Mill, the transport being arranged for at a point where the road approached from the north. We wished afterwards that we had ourselves gone by car, as we found nothing apper-



LITTLE FORGE

taining to iron on the way, and it was a good two miles. However, Huggett's Furnace, a jumble of russet roofs, appeared through the trees, and we were upon the very ground where the first cannon had been cast by Ralph Hogge in 1543, or we thought so, for there is some dispute as to where this was.

The Local Intelligence Department reported that inquiry had led to the belief that it was cast at Hog House, but this seems to be open to considerable doubt, as Hog House stands

on a hill, and there could not, therefore, have been any water power to work the bellows for the forced draught.

Mr. F. G. Brabant, in his *Rambles in Sussex*, in quoting the old doggerel:

> "Master Huggett and his man John
> They did cast the first can-nón,"

quotes it as a classic example of the inaccuracy of local tradition, as there is a Huggett's Furnace in the neighbourhood which has become confused with Hog. The rhyme, however, is an old one, and it seems much more likely that Huggett is a form of Hogge than that local tradition has mixed the two names.

The buildings at Huggett's Furnace are divided into two groups, and are now known as Huggett's Furnace and Huggett's Furnace Mill. It was twilight before we had explored the place, and I have therefore shown this aspect, rather a ghostly one, of the dead furnace where the first cannon was cast in England, now a haunt of ancient peace.

To the north-west of Huggett's Furnace, leading from the farm up the mill to Denture Shaw, is a curious straight grass channel about ten feet wide, and from four to six feet deep. It looks suspicious, but up to date neither the geological or engineering experts have pronounced any opinion beyond the conjecture that it may be an old timber slide for sending wood down from the hill toward the furnace (page 201).

During some of the time that I was awaiting developments at G.H.Q. I read up quite a lot about iron, for Brown

had a library of books for reference. However, very little had been written on the subject of iron, and the searching of many works did not produce very much. It is singular how small has been any systematic study of this important subject. There is a clear field, and I am seriously thinking of collaborating with Brown, and writing a book entitled *The Lost Iron Age of the Weald.* There is only one rival in the field and that is the excellent *Historical Geography of the Wealden Iron Industry,* by M. C. Delany, published by Messrs. Benn Bros., but good as this little work is, it is rather of the nature of a brilliant sketch than an exhaustive work, and it has no photographs or drawings of the various traces of the iron age to be found to-day. I will therefore just give a brief historical outline of the subject, beginning with the ancient Britons who are recorded by Roman historians as having been in the habit of wearing pieces of iron not so much as ornaments but as an outward and visible sign of wealth.

Bars of British iron can be seen in the British Museum, but there is very little direct evidence of any of it being Wealden iron. Most of the British manufactured iron came from the Forest of Dean.

However, contrary to generally received impressions, the Britons that the Romans found and conquered were not merely savage people with barbaric and crude arts. On the contrary, the Celts taught the Romans the art of enamelling, and a cursory study of their pre-Roman arts (again to be seen in the British Museum) will show a very high degree of artistic and manufacturing skill. Cæsar speaks of iron " in maritimis

partibus," and this expression must refer to the Weald. Furley writes :

" During the period that Rome held Britain as a tributary province but little progress was made in bringing the great forest of Andred into cultivation. Its density and the nature of the soil were impediments to this ; though there is every reason to suppose that mining operations were carried on there. Iron certainly became one of the exports of Roman Britain, and the principal iron districts at this period were in Gloucestershire and in our forest of Andred, forming the Weald of Kent, Sussex, and Surrey. The cinder heaps, and the coins of Nero, Vespasian, and other emperors, from time to time found in the forest, establish the fact. Two Roman urns were discovered, in a bog (which the good people of the Weald call a hassock), not far from Frittenden Church, surrounded by brushwood. The urns were of black earthenware, not unlike those made in the Upchurch marshes ; they were found in a hole with decayed vegetable matter to the depth of ten or twelve feet. Now, this district was unreclaimed forest for centuries after the Roman occupation of Britain ceased. A few years ago some fragments of Roman construction were found in the walls of Frittenden Church ; is it not therefore probable that some attempt at smelting had been made here ? The Roman process of smelting was so imperfect that in comparatively modern times smelters have often, it is said, found it more profitable to re-commit the old scoriæ to the furnace than to dig for fresh ore."

Andrew Yarranton, who wrote on *England's Improvement*

*by Sea and Land*, in the latter part of the seventeenth century, tells us that:

"*In the Forest of Deane and thereabouts, the iron is made at this day of cinders, being the rough and offal thrown by, in the Romans' time, they then having only foot-blasts to melt the iron stone; but now* (1683) *by the force of a great wheel that drives a pair of bellows twenty feet long, all that iron is extracted out of the cinders which could not be forced from it by the Roman foot-blast.*"

In a dialogue by Yarranton between "a tynn miner of Cornwall, an iron myner of the Forest of Deane, in Gloucestershire, and a traveller," the following amusing statement will be found:—

"*Well, sir, so as to make it clear to you that iron was in England a thousand years since, is very evident by those great heaps of cinders formerly made of iron-stone, they being the offal* (*or waste*) *thrown out of the foot-blasts by the Romans, they then having no works to go by water to drive bellows, but all by foot-blast; and at present great oaks are growing upon the tops of these cinder-heaps, and monies continually is found amongst these cinders. . . . And this offal of the foot-blast* (*by the Romans then cast by*) *doth at present make the best and profitablest iron in England.*"

Another Roman method of making a blast furnace was to set up a conical pile of charcoal and ore upon the side of a

wind-swept hill and wait for a suitable day and let the wind do the blowing. The remains of one of these structures was found at Maresfield.

It is generally held that there is no evidence at all of the Saxons working the iron of the Weald. However, in Domesday Book one of the assets of East Grinstead was an " iron mine." This would hardly be worth mentioning if it were not in use. Just as the Saxons used the Roman roads and bridges as long as they lasted, although not very skilled apparently in making new ones—the frequent name Street End tells a story of unrenewed bridges and neglected ways—so it seems inconceivable that they would not continue to use the iron furnaces which Roman Britain had left. They could hardly have kept going by using up old iron. The story of St. Dunstan and the Devil is illuminating, too, in this direction. Mayfield is one of the earliest iron centres, and although one may be allowed to reject as possibly not strictly historical the origin of the calybiate spring at Tunbridge Wells, caused by the arch enemy of mankind leaping thither, seven and a half miles, to cool his inflamed nose, yet the scene of the comedy is significant. The account is given by a monk of Canterbury, and was written before the Conquest. St. Dunstan was working at a forge in Mayfield. True he was doing ordinary blacksmith's work, but the fact that the forge was in the heart of the iron ore country pre-supposes a furnace. A very-well-designed village sign stands in Mayfield to-day. Beneath the main device St. Dunstan, in black, is pulling at the Devil, in red, with his iron tongs.

After the Conquest, however, there are many references to iron smelting in documents which still exist. A letter from the steward of the Bishop of Chichester (1226) advises the Bishop to get his iron from Gloucester. Another old account tells of Spanish iron supplied to Boxley in Kent, and in 1332 there is a record of the purchase of seven blooms of Wealden iron at 3*s.* 6*d.*

Here are some more extracts I have laid hands on.

" The earliest cannons were mere cylinders fixed on sledges, and were sometimes composed of iron bars laid side by side, like the staves of a cask, and held together by iron hoops; others were formed by iron plates rolled, or in jacked leather bound with broad circles of iron."—Horsefield's *Sussex.*

" The impetus given to the trades in iron and wool induced the owners, especially of the woods, to clear them with a rapidity which became alarming to the nation, and one of the earliest Statutes passed ' for the preservation of woods ' was the 35th Henry VIII., which provided that after Michaelmas, 1544, in the felling of underwood of twenty-five years' growth or under, there should be left on every acre ' twelve standels of stores of oak,' to be made up of elm, ash, asp, or beech, when there was no oak. It further provided that no coppice of underwoods of two acres and upwards should be converted into tillage or pasture. This is followed by a proviso that the Act should not extend to any Lords or owners of woods within ' any of the towns, parishes, or places known to be within the Wilds of the counties of Kent, Surrey, or Sussex.' "

" In the first year of the reign of Elizabeth, the alarmists

succeeded in passing an Act which provided that timber should not be felled to make coals for burning iron within fourteen miles of the sea or of the river Thames, etc.; but this prohibition was not to extend 'to any part of Sussex, nor to the Weald of Kent, nor to the neighbouring parishes of Charlewood, Newdigate, and Leigh in the Weild of Surrey,' where the manufacture of iron was carried on.

"A great deal of heavy ordnance was now cast, and even exported, especially from Sussex, under licence from the Lord Admiral. This, as it may be readily imagined, was a dangerous proceeding, and led frequently to smuggling, as shown to the Privy Council by a declaration of a Christopher Baker, one of the officials, 'touching iron furnaces,' in which he assures the council that there were five furnaces in Sussex solely used for making ordnance and shot, and he had been well informed that there had been sold to one stranger's shop, being an argosy, within the previous month, by Partridge and others, twenty pieces of ordnance at the least; strangers' ships were thus so well appointed that no poor merchant's ship might pass through the seas without being molested and robbed. He adds that, in addition to several new works which had been recently set up, there were more than one hundred furnaces and iron mills in the three counties of Sussex, Surrey, and Kent, which led to the decay of the woods, timber, and tillage, and also the highways, as they carried all their timber in winter time. Thus he concludes: 'In a few years there will not be sufficient timber to build ships for Her Majesty's service.'"—Furley's *Weald of Kent.*

In the reign of Elizabeth was passed a Highway Act, which provided that "no one shall erect in Sussex, Surrey, or Kent any ironmills, furnace or bloomary, other than upon the old or former bays or pens, unless he shall furnish them with timber grown on his own soil; nor shall he convert into coals or fuel for making of iron any sound timber of one foot square at the stub under a penalty of £300." It proceeds then to declare that the highways in these three counties are greatly injured "by means of carriage of coals [charcoal], mines, and iron to and from the ironworks," and enacts that the ironmasters carrying the same for one mile on any highway between October 12 and May 1, shall likewise carry a cart-load of cinder, gravel, stone, sand or chalk for their repair, to be deposited where the justices shall direct.

The iron industry reached their full power in the Elizabethan era. Almost every landowner who had iron and water power set up furnaces, and the yeoman farmer in many cases became the wealthy and titled aristocracy of the Wealden Black Country.

Not only were the streams of the Weald used for the supply of water power for the ironmills, but the small rivers which now in their upper reaches are navigable in small sections only for canoes or dinghys were then considerably more important. It is easy to see that the lower portions of rivers such as the Brede, the Rother, the Cuckmere were considerable waters before the land had been reclaimed along their marshy banks. A much larger volume of water flowed in and out, as we have seen in "The Lost Harbours of Sussex." Alfriston on the

Cuckmere had a considerable harbour. The ironworks of the Brede, of great importance as supplying ordnance to Winchelsea and Rye, were connected to these places by navigable estuaries and not, as now, by ditches. At Robertsbridge to-day it is nearly possible to jump over the stream, but it is on record that the products of the furnaces and forges of that place were sent away by water, not perhaps in very large ships, but in flat-bottomed barges or lighters. A system of locks maintained the level of the river to a serviceable depth. One of these ancient locks, or fragments of it sufficient to disclose its nature, was found in the marshes of the Rother, not far below Robertsbridge.

In like manner it can be assumed that the upper reaches of the Cuckmere, as of the Rother, were at one time invaluable for water transport when roads were very bad and almost impassable, as many Acts of Parliament concerning them show. If you look on the map following page 196 you will notice how the ironworks seem to cluster round the rivers. This is, of course, primarily for water power, but it looks highly probable in the light of the discovery near Robertsbridge that there might have been some connected system of water transport.

The decline of the prosperity of the Wealden Black Country was, as we have seen previously, rapid and final. True, during the days of iron and steel shortage of the war, iron experts did go down into Sussex and discuss the possibility of a revival, but for modern processes it was decided that the ore was not of sufficiently serviceable quality.

The last actual output of iron in Sussex was at Ashburnham,

but the last product of any note were the old railings and gates of St. Paul's Cathedral, which were cast at "Gloster Furnace" at Lamberhurst. Lamberhurst is partly in Kent and partly in Sussex, but the furnace was, I think, on the Sussex side of the boundary and the stream that supplied the water power was the boundary itself. The story is that these railings were written up at the time as *the most magnificent balustrade in the Universe,* not, mark you, only in this world, but in all other worlds, though how the writer, unless he was in close touch with Mr. Vale Owen, could make the comparison is not disclosed.

Nearly all travel books on Sussex and Kent and most guide-books record that these rails, now in a large measure replaced at St. Paul's, were shipped to America, but that the ship in which they were carried foundered. At great expense, it is stated, some of these rails were got up again and taken to Canada, where they can now be seen in a cemetery in Toronto.

Not very long after the publication of my *Unknown Kent,* where I had recounted this story, a resident of Toronto wrote to me for chapter and verse of my authority for this piece of history, because, he said, he had sought diligently for these historic railings in all the cemeteries and had not found them. I could give him no more information and cannot really get any more light on the mystery. Perhaps some other travellers, on the look out for matter in a work on *Unknown Canada,* may be able to find these relics of the iron times of Sussex. It is heartrending, too, to feel that Mars may be cutting us out in the matter of iron railings, now that the

hitherto finest examples in the universe are missing. Possibly the canal theories and the mysterious straight markings on that planet may be something to do with railings.

Although this subject of the bygone Black Country of the Sussex Weald has been running through this book my central theme, space is giving out and I am in danger of being accused of writing a treatise on iron instead of one on Sussex. I cannot, therefore, give to you the varied and interesting findings of the Confraternity of the Historical Investigators of the Sussex Iron Age.

I cannot, however, leave the subject without giving some account of Brown's triumphal finale which warranted me in calling this chapter "The Iron Ghost."

It was on the fifth day of the campaign, or to be more accurate, on the fifth night, that we were to assemble one hour after sunset at General Head Quarters by the old Hammer Pond.

A thrill ran through the village as various contingents of the Society arrived from various directions. Nobody knew quite what all the fuss was about, for Brown had spread about all sorts of contradictory rumours. The favourite theory was that our intrepid leader was the founder of a new religion. Judging from the bedraggled condition of some of the Brownies, who had rather neglected the Tombstone Department for the delights of exploring hammer ponds, it would seem that one tenet at least of our creed was a firm belief in complete immersion.

Brown is a bachelor, but he ought to have known that the

members of the Tombstone Department should have been in bed, and I knew that the lecture, or séance, or meeting, or whatever it was going to be, would not be over till it was rather late, even for the Guides. However, he explained afterwards that darkness was essential. He announced that he was about to show us a ghost, and daylight would be fatal to the project.

I arrived upon the scene rather late, having been out in search of one of the parties of the Local Intelligence Department; they had got hung up without any means of transport. At first sight, as we approached through the dense growths at the side of the hammer pond, we beheld a fiery glow coming from the direction of the G.H.Q. and for a few moments feared that it was on fire.

On nearer approach, however, we found that the firelight came from the interior of a ruined brick tower. It made an eerie object reflected in the still waters of the pool, and some rents in the brickwork seemed like fiery eyes, and made it appear like some uncouth monster grinning at us. If Brown had calculated on frightening us with such an obvious bogey he was out in his reckoning, for I can bear record that not even the youngest member of the Tombstone Department paled before it.

Suddenly Brown appeared against the firelit sky and beckoned us to approach. I might explain that the place where this fire was situated was within the ruined walls of an oast house, at least I think it must have been an oast house, though Brown had tried to connect it picturesquely with the

old ironworks. Around it was high ground, so that from two sides we could stand and look down into the space from which the bright light streamed and from which smoke was ascending.

"Behold," exclaimed Brown dramatically, "the Iron Ghost, the lost image of a lost cause."

We looked and beheld multitudinous smoking lights. They were set in earth and ashes roughly made into a large relief map of the Weald through which glittering rivers found their way to the sea. Dense forests were represented by moss and hammer ponds by pieces of glass.

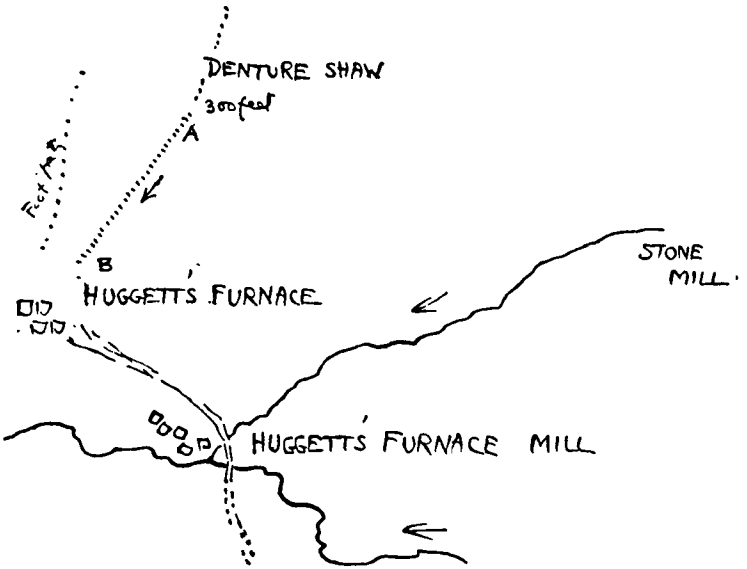
There in fiery image was the result of our research. The Black Country of the Weald. The valleys of the Cuckmere and the Rother made the densest masses of flame and smoke, but beyond the confines of Sussex, in Surrey and Kent, we could see the Lost Age in full blast.

We all voted it jolly good. For the benefit of the few of my readers who do not at present belong to the Confraternity of the Historical Investigators of the Sussex Iron Age, I have made a sketch-map in colour (following page 198) of Brown's Iron Ghost so that it may be handed on to the generations following.

Now I am reminded that I must come to the end of this book, not for want of any more to say, but for want of room. Sussex, like Kent, we have seen, holds many varieties of scenic delights. Like Kent it has the sea, and like Kent it has a very strong character of its own. The South Downs are its chief glory and its woodlands. It is curious that

SURREY
KENT
SUSSEX
SHERE
ABINGER
FRENSHAM
FARNHAM
THURSLEY
WITLEY
CRANLEIGH
COPTHORNE
LINGFIELD
COWDEN
EDENBRIDGE
TONBRIDGE
HASLEMERE
CHIDDINGFOLD
DUNSFOLD
IFIELD
EAST GRINSTEAD
WITHYAM
PENSHURST
BIDDENDEN
TENTERDEN
HAWKHURST
LINDFIELD
NORTH CHAPEL
LINCH
KIRDFORD
FERNHURST
CHICHESTER
WISBOROUGH GREEN
HORSHAM
BALCOMBE
ROTHERFIELD
WADHURST
ETCHINGHAM
MAYFIELD
BURWASH
ROBERTSBRIDGE
BECKLEY
RYE
HEATHFIELD
BRIGHTLING
CROWHURST
BEAUPORT
BATTLE
HASTINGS
PEVENSEY
SHIPLEY
BOLNEY
CUCKFIELD
HORSTED KEYNES
CHILDINGLY
DALLINGTON
WARBLETON
NEWICK
SHEFFIELD
WELLINGHAM
SOUTH DOWNS
R. ARUN
R. ADUR
R. OUSE
R. CUCKMERE
R. MEDWAY
R. WEY
SCALE
MILES
Wealden ironworks.
Furnaces of 13th & 18th centuries
Roman ironworks
THE BLACK COUNTRY OF THE MIDDLE AGES

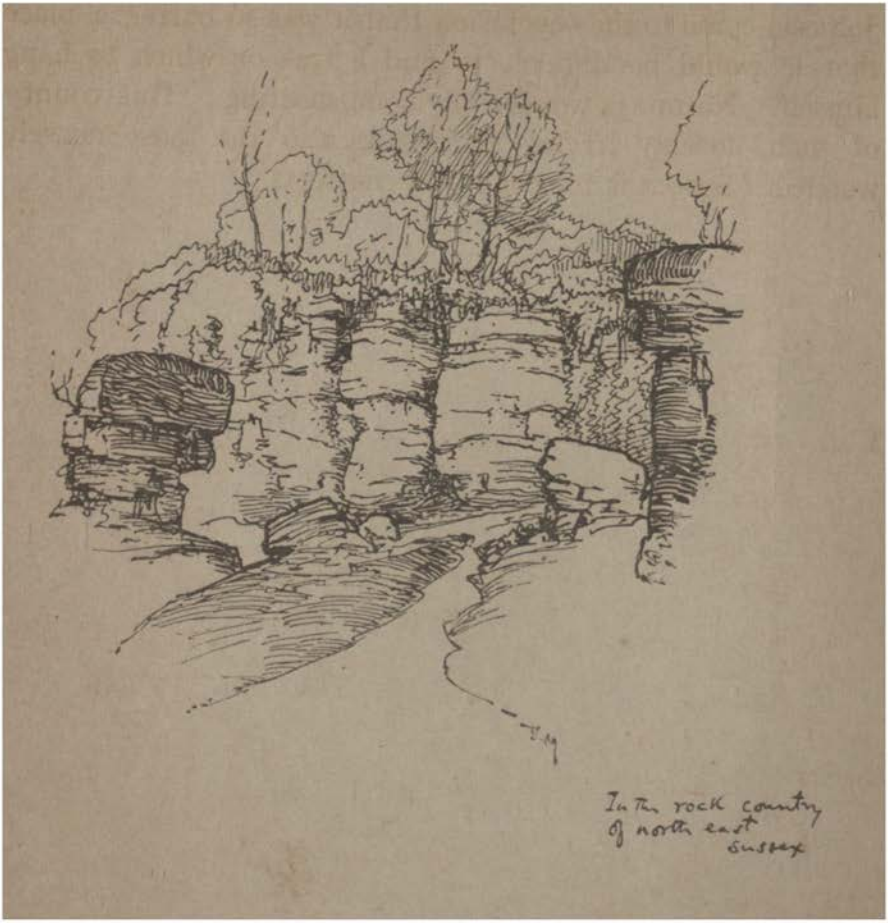
Sussex, which contains more wooded country than any county in England, should be remembered often in the popular mind as a treeless county. Only the other day a




MAP SHOWING MYSTERIOUS CUTTING (A TO B) LEADING DOWN A STEEP HILL FROM DENTURE SHAW TO HUGGETT'S FURNACE (SEE PAGE 188).

lady who heard that I was writing and sketching Sussex was genuinely sorry for me, as I could "do trees so well," and in Sussex I should not get much opportunity of letting myself

go in this direction. Probably her knowledge of the county was confined to a few excursions near Brighton, where Dr. Johnson came to the conclusion that it was so barren a place that it would be difficult to find a tree on which to hang himself. Nature is wonderfully compensating. This county of such notably treeless regions is also the most densely wooded. Sussex is the county of contrasts.


In the rock country
of north east
Sussex

# INDEX


AINSWORTH, 139
Alfred the Great, 4
Alfriston, 136, 140
Archbishop Parker, 21
Ardingly, 61
Arun, 58, 104
Ashburnham, 41, 61, 66
Ashdown Forest, 63

BATTLE, 61
Beachy Head, 101, 130
Belloc, 56, 103
Bexhill, 35
Bignor, 104, 105, 106, 109
Billingshurst, 102
Blackdown, 35
Blake, 97, 161
Bodiam Castle, 150
Boring Farm, 180
Borstal, 6, 80
Bosham, 162, 164
Boston, 81
Bramber, 5
Brede, 195
Brightling, 61
Brighton, 3, 25, 30
Buckholt, 61
Burwash, 177
Buxted, 38, 58, 61, 180, 181

CÆSAR, 155
Chanctonbury, 6, 8
Charles I., 41
Chichester, 97, 104, 161, 166
Chiddingly, 20, 61
Cinderhill, 41
Cinque Ports, 86
Cissa, 6
Cissbury, 6
Coldwaltham, 104
Crawley, 66
Cromwell, 42
Cuckfield, 45, 61
Cuckmere, 46, 58, 130, 136, 195, 196, 200
Cylinders, 38

DALLINGTON, 61
Delany, 62
Denis Duval, 148
Dickens, 29
Domesday Book, 7
Drayton, 53
Dunstan, 98, 192

EASTBOURNE, 97
East Grinstead, 49, 61
Elizabeth, 21
Etchingham, 61
Ethelwulf, 4

FALLS of the Medway, 18

Fécamp, 5
Felpham, 97, 161
Fen Place Ponds, 14
Fletching, 61
Framfield, 20, 61
Frant, 61
Furnace Farm, 38, 67, 172

Gilbert White, 99
Great Streele, 163
Great Wigsell, 143, 150
Groombridge, 18

Hammer Moors, 111
Hammer Ponds, 38, 70
Hammer Wood, 38
Hardham, 103
Hartfield, 61
Hastings, 155
Hawkhurst, 142, 143
Heathfield, 66
Henry VIII., 21, 53, 165, 193
Hissey, 134
Hollingshed, 178
Horsham, 66, 67, 72
Horsted, 61
Horsted Keynes, 61
Hove, 26
Huggett's Furnace, 186

Ifield, 61, 172
Iron Hill, 38

Kipling, 2, 97
Kirdford, 69

Lamberhurst, 61
Legh Manor, 45
Leland, 91
Lewes, 12, 98
Little Streele, 163

Oldbury, 106
Old Furnace, 46, 49, 50
Ordnance Place, 38
Ouse, 58
Ovingdean Grange, 139

Netherfield, 61
Newhaven, 12, 130
New York, 94
Ninfield, 35
North Chapel, 61

Maresfield, 20, 61
Mayfield, 38, 61, 177, 192
Medway, 12, 14
Minepit Copse, 38
Mole, 12
Mountfield, 61

Parson Darby's Hole, 132, 136
Peaspottage Forest, 67
Penhurst, 61
Petworth, 58, 61
Pevensey, 33, 158
Poly Olbion, 55
Portsmouth, 159, 165
Pulborough, 35, 69

Ralphe Hogge, 41, 58, 187
Robertsbridge, 61
Rochester, 160
Romans, 20, 156, 157, 187
Romney Marsh, 134
Rother, 58, 110, 195, 196, 200
Rotherfield, 61
Rowfant, 61
Rye, 75, 77, 80, 148–154

St. Cuthman, 34
St. Leonard's Forest, 66, 70
Salehurst, 61

Selsey, 165
Shelley, 97
Sidlesham, 164
Slaugham, 45, 61
Smokey House, 38
South Downs, 19, 58, 95, 124
Spood Lane, 163
Stane Street, 103
Steyning, 4, 5
Stopham Bridge, 74
Sutton End, 58, 109, 110

Tennyson, 197
Toronto, 197
Turner, 30
Turner's Hill, 12, 14

Uckfield, 61

Wadhurst, 61, 177
Waldron, 61
Warbledon, 61
Weald, 4, 6, 19, 20, 21, 58, 195
Wesley, 148
Western Rother, 55
West Hartley, 61
Wey, 104
William the Conqueror, 5, 86
William Penn, 103
Winchelsea, 75, 94
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